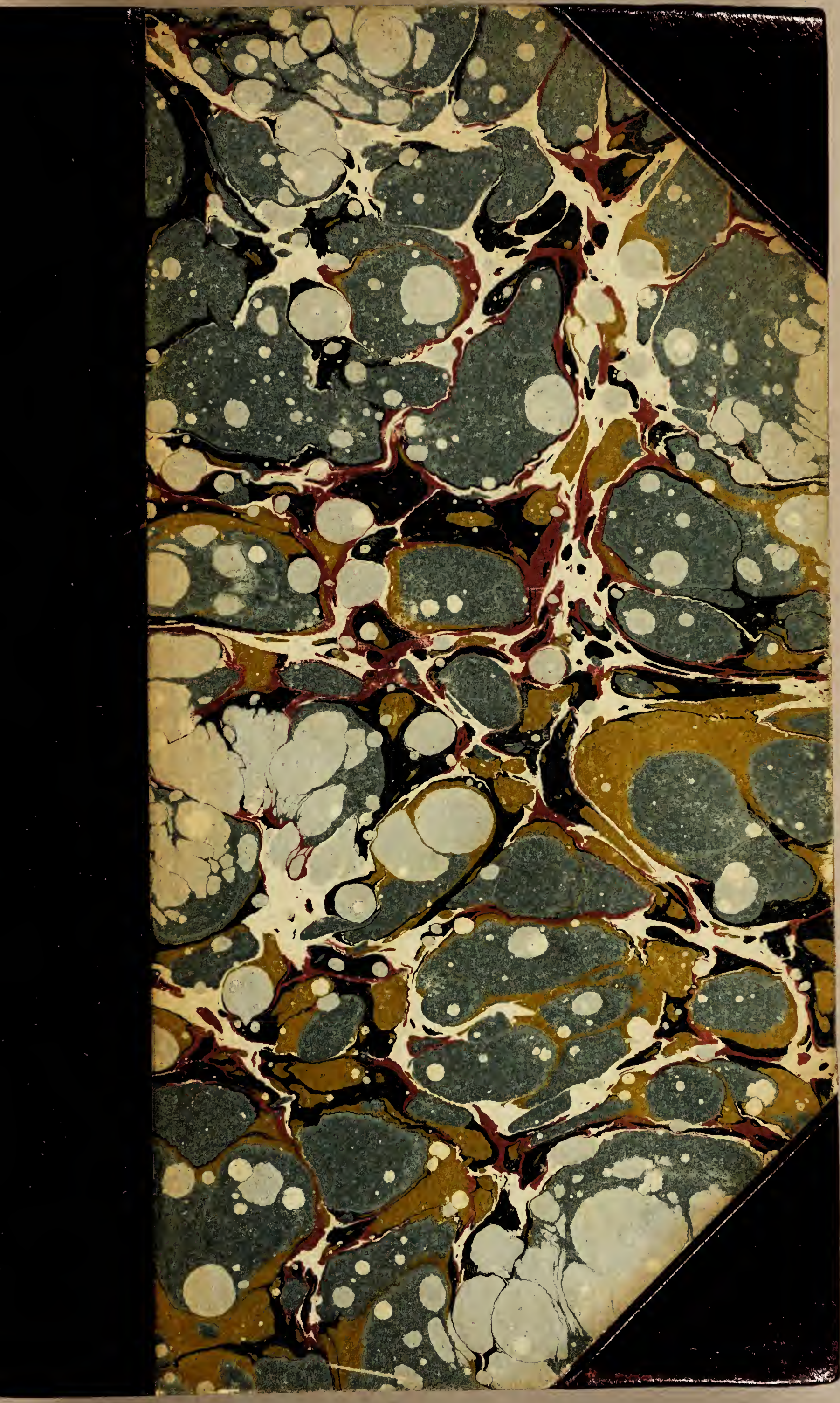

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# CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

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## ERRATA.

PAGE 3, LINE 11, for 'it not,' read 'not it.'
—— 20, for 'conjectures,' read 'conjunctures.'
10, —— 7, for 'Frenchard,' 'read Trenchard.'
19, —— 15, for 'too,' read 'two.'
24, —— 18, for 'iſlands run,' read 'iſlands to run.'
25, —— 17, 'dele ſo.'
30, —— 20, dele 'own.'
33, —— 13, for 'and privileges,' read 'and the privileges.'
37, —— 4, for 'in the court,' read 'in a court.'
40, —— 17, for 'continue to,' read 'continue ſo to.'
61, —— 9, for 'or that,' read 'or in that.'
100, —— 7, for 'firſt ſuffered,' read 'firſt have ſuffered.'
108, —— 18, dele 'on.'
131, —— 5, dele 'withal.'
151, —— 3, for 'Great Britain,' read 'England.'

RPJCB

# CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

MEASURES CARRYING ON

WITH RESPECT TO THE

# BRITISH COLONIES

IN

# NORTH AMERICA.

---

*There is neither King or Sovereign Lord on Earth, who has beyond his own Domain power to lay one Farthing on his Subjects without the grant and consent of those, who pay it; unless he does it by tyranny and violence.*

Philippe de Commines, Ch. 108.

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LONDON,

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RPJCB

# CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

NO one knows, how far every perſon in Britain may be intereſted in the event of the meaſures now carrying on with reſpect to our colonies in North America. This ſeems to entitle any man on account of his own ſtake therein to ſpeak his ſentiments on the ſubject. The concern of the community gives to them likewiſe for their better ſecurity a claim, that every opinion may be offered for conſideration. Theſe things reſult from the nature of a free ſociety and particularly from the conſtitution of Great Britain, where the people chuſe one part of

the legiſlature and where every man is ſuppoſed to have ultimately a ſhare in the government of his country.

One point in diſpute between us and the Americans is the right of taxing them here at home. This may be ſaid to concern the power of our parliament. But ſo does every general propoſition of right and wrong. When any thing is affirmed to be unjuſt, does not it conclude and is it not almoſt ſynonimous to the ſaying, that a law made to enforce it would be ſo too and beyond the proper power of a legiſlature? Vengeance and puniſhment do in the courſe of things aſſuredly purſue ſtates and nations for their oppreſſion and injuſtice; againſt the commiſſion of which it is beyond queſtion the right of every member of the community to warn the reſt.

I ſay

I ſay it with ſubmiſſion, but the power of the parliament is the right of the public. The particular members of that moſt reſpectable body are in the ſtatutes enacted by them no more perſonally intereſted, than the reſt of their countrymen. Theſe paſs through their hands, but being ſo paſſed, they are themſelves bound to obey them in common with others. They are indeed our truſtees and guardians in that high office, but they will, on that account be the more inclined, that every ſtep taken or to be taken by them ſhould be fully and carefully examined, like all other honeſt men earneſt for the intereſt of thoſe, whoſe concerns are committed to their care.

A conſideration of the meaſures now propoſed may likewiſe poſſibly lead towards ſome nice and delicate conjectures or circumſtances, whether of the preſent time or of that to come. But it need not

be ſaid, that the writer only finds the one and gueſſes at the other; they depend on an author much higher than Princes or their miniſters, but who is pleaſed to ſuffer the actions of theſe to have moſt eſſential effects in the producing them. What can then be a more fit means to induce a due reflection on our proceedings and to inſure from them a deſirable ſucceſs, than to lay before the public or the governors of it ſome poſſible conſequences of their conduct?

We have not far to ſeek for the cauſe of the preſent ſituation of things between the mother-country and our colonies of North America; of the oppoſition and diſturbances on the one hand and of the violent laws, motions and preparations on the other. Theſe all undoubtedly proceed from our having taxed thoſe colonies without their conſent. Affection and union obtained between us before; there

there ſucceeded inſtead animoſity and oppoſition, as ſoon as that was attempted; however peace and ſatisfaction were on our ſtaying our hands again reſtored. We are now once more come back to the charge and the ſpirit of diſcord ſeems likewiſe returned ſeven times ſtronger, than it was before. Other broils and conteſts may and many no doubt will ariſe from this cauſe, ſhould it proceed; but this is the origin, the ſpring and the ſource. The right itſelf of this meaſure is in queſtion, as well as the expediency of it; I will therefore preſume to ſay ſomething to that propoſition.

The inhabitants of our colonies in North America are ſuppoſed to conſiſt of about two millions of perſons; they occupy and poſſeſs a very extenſive territory, much larger than Great Britain; they are not themſelves the original people of the country, but they now ſtand in their

place;

place; they have in general been born and bred there, however they receive likewiſe yearly from other places many, who mix themſelves with them; they have divided themſelves into ſeveral different governments; they have according to certain rules or laws agreed upon among them allotted every man his own; they have felled the foreſts; they have cleared and tilled the land, they have planted it, they have ſown it, they have ſtocked it with cattle; they have built themſelves houſes; they have entered into exchange and commerce; they have ſpared and ſaved for a future day or for their families; they have by many and various means acquired many and various ſorts of property; they are by nature intitled to welfare and happineſs and to ſeek and purſue thoſe bleſſings, by all the methods not attended with fraud or violence towards others, which they ſhall conceive and believe the moſt probable to procure

or enſure them; they have for that end a right to freedom in their governments and to ſecurity in their perſons and properties; none are warranted to deprive or diſpoſſeſs them of theſe things; ſhould on the contrary one man or a body of men advance any claim, which tended to enſlave all the perſons or to unſettle all the property of this great community, to diveſt them of every thing, which they poſſeſs and to leave them nothing, which they could call their own of all, that they have thus inherited earned or acquired; the very enormity, the evil and unnatural conſequences of ſuch a propoſition would of themſelves ſufficiently ſhew its abſurdity, weakneſs and unreaſonableneſs.

Theſe are all either primary, eſſential, inherent rights of human nature or ſuch as do with reſpect to perſons in the ſituation before deſcribed neceſſarily flow

and

and follow from them. Thoſe were conferred upon them by the great Author of their being when he was pleaſed to endow them with the faculties of men, with the perception of good and evil, with the means of ſelf-preſervation and ſelf-defence, with the organs of reaſon and of ſpeech, and with a capacity to aſſociate themſelves for their mutual protection and ſupport. They are common to all mankind; they ſubſiſt at all times, in all regions and all climates; in Turkey, in Spain, in France, in Old England and in New, in Europe and in America; whenever and wherever a number of men are found to be the objects of them. I don't mean that they are in all theſe places always or at this time poſſeſſed and enjoyed as they ought to be. But they are to anſwer for that, who do ſo commonly employ to the enſlaving and oppreſſing of mankind the powers, which theſe intruſt only for their protection and defence.

defence. However this is only abuſe, violence and injuſtice; the right nevertheleſs ſubſiſts and remains.

It is not on this ſubject neceſſary to enter into a long and minute detail of reaſoning. Theſe principles are with us common and publick; they are founded on the good, the welfare and the happineſs of mankind. They were the principles of our anceſtors, of our grandfathers and of our fathers; they may perhaps not be at preſent in their full vigour; however, I truſt, that they are not yet ſo worn out or loſt from among us, but that they ſtill remain the principles of the nation. They are to deſcribe them by a word well known in our language the principles of Whigs; whereby I don't however mean of certain modern Whigs, who ſeem more fond of the word, than of any thing belonging to the character; who have perhaps at one time or other

of their lives counteracted all the measures and contradicted all the principles that ever did an honour to the name; but I mean of Whigs before the Revolution and at the time of it; I mean the principles which such men as Mr. Locke, Lord Molesworth and Mr. Frenchard maintained with their pens, Mr. Hampden and Lord John Russel with their blood and Mr. Algernon Sydney with both; names, which must surely by all Englishmen ever be revered, as those of some of the first among men. But let me add, that they are not only the principles of speculative students in their closets or of great but unfortunate men, whom their zeal and virtue have lead to martyrdom for the liberties of their country and the welfare of mankind; but that they are likewise the real principles of our present actual Government, the principles of the Revolution and those on which are established the throne of the King and the

set-

ſettlement of the Illuſtrious Family now reigning over us.

On the ſame principles reſt both in general many rights of the Americans and in particular the right now before us. Theſe are hereby involved and interwoven with our higheſt and moſt ſacred concerns; we cannot lift up our hands to take them away without forfeiting our national character, without renouncing the tenets and maxims whereon we have on our moſt important and critical occaſions ever acted, as a People and without declaring that we claim a right to reſiſt and oppoſe all thoſe, who oppreſs us ourſelves and at the ſame time to trample upon and tyrannize over all others, where we hope, that we have the power to do it with impunity.

But it may be ſaid, that theſe are indeed in themſelves very true and com-

mendable opinions; but that they are here introduced on ſubjects not worthy of them, a duty of a few ſhillings upon ſome ſorts of paper or parchment and of a few pence upon a pound of Tea. Let us therefore more particularly conſider the nature of the claim and pretenſion in queſtion. Suppoſe then one perſon to have in his pocket an hundred pounds, but another to have the right to take it from him and to put it into his own pocket or to do with it what he pleaſes; to whom does that money belong? This needs no anſwer. Suppoſe the ſum to be a thouſand or ten thouſand pounds? That makes no difference. Suppoſe one perſon to have a right to demand of another not only one certain ſum or what he has about him, but as much as he pleaſes and as often? This goes to the all of that other. But ſuppoſe not one ſingle perſon only to be ſubject to ſuch demands from one other, but a number of men, a colony

or

or any other community to be ſo ſubject to the demands of ſome other ſociety. What then? Why then that will go in like manner to their all. This ſeems to be ſo evident, that whoever ſhall multiply words on the ſubject, will hardly do it for the ſake of being convinced.

But is this caſe, that of the Americans; for it is ſaid that the money raiſed on them is to be employed for their own benefit, in their civil ſervice or military defence? Let me aſk then, Who are in their caſe to determine, whether any money is at all wanted for ſuch purpoſes; they who pay it or they who take it? They who take it. Who are to determine the quantity wanted? They who take it. Who are to determine, how often it is wanted? They who take it. Who are to determine, whether it is really laid out in the purpoſes pretended? They who take it. Suppoſe the Americans ſhould

be

be of opinion or declare, that the money ſo raiſed is uſed not for their advantage but the contrary; is that a bar to the raiſing? No. Suppoſe them to complain, that the money pretended to be laid out in their civil ſervice is given to corrupt their Governors or Judges; is that a bar to the raiſing? No. Suppoſe them to ſignify, that the money alledged to be uſed in their military defence is employed in paying troops to enſlave them and which they had rather be without; is that a bar to the raiſing? No. Wherein then does this differ from will and pleaſure in the moſt abſolute ſenſe?

This claim affects therefore moſt clearly the all of the Americans. Two millions of people, ſubject to no leſs than twelve different Governments and inhabiting, poſſeſſing and being maſters of a country exceedingly larger than that of thoſe, who make the claim or in whoſe name it is made,

made, have on this ground no property at all, nothing which they can truly call their own, nothing but what may at any time be demanded of them, but what they may be deprived of without and againſt their will and conſent. It cannot therefore ſurely be a queſtion whether or no, this is a matter of ſuch a magnitude as to deſerve the moſt ſerious diſcuſſion. But it might here be without further words left to every man's determination, whether this is on the one hand a reaſonable ground, whereon to put into confuſion all the parts of the Britiſh empire, to throw the mother country and her North-American colonies into the moſt deadly feuds and in all appearance a civil war with one another or whether it is not on the other hand a propoſition inconſiſtent with the eſſential laws of nature, ſubverſive of the firſt and inherent rights of humanity and contrary to the principles whereon our forefathers

defended

defended and under the ſanction of which they have through ſo many civil wars and with the depoſition, baniſhment and change of ſo many Princes delivered down to us the rights and properties, which Engliſhmen now enjoy.

But it is in this diſpute very often repreſented; that a total and abſolute dependence on the Britiſh Parliament without any exception whatſoever either with regard to taxes or any other is liberty itſelf; it is Britiſh liberty, which is the beſt of liberty. I anſwer, who ſays otherwiſe in the caſe of us, who chuſe that Parliament; but that in ſome other caſes, this poſition may perhaps be more liable to queſtion. Our North-American colonies are as to their internal conſtitution a very free people, as free as the Venetians, the Dutch or the Swiſs or perhaps more ſo than any of them. This proceeds from their Aſſemblies being not only the

nominal

nominal but the real Repreſentatives, of thoſe whom they govern. Theſe are elected fairly, fully and often. In theſe Aſſemblies their liberty conſiſts and it is certainly true and genuine. But change the ſcene a little; let any one Colony be taxed and governed not by their own but by the Aſſembly of another; what is then become of this their genuine liberty? It is gone and loſt with their own Aſſembly. Let all the Colonies be ſo ſubjected to the Aſſembly of ſome one among them. That won't mend the matter. Let us take a larger ſcale. Suppoſe this power over them be lodged in the Parliament of Ireland. We are never the nearer. Let us come towards home. Were the kingdom of Ireland under the taxation and direction of the Britiſh Parliament would they then think themſelves to be very free? For an anſwer to this queſtion enquire of one of that country. Place then the Iriſh under one of the Aſſemblies be-

fore mentioned. They would be yet further from home and it might not be better with them. Let us take our own turn. Suppoſe Great-Britain on the like conditions under the Parliament of Ireland. God forbid. I think that I have but one more point, before that I am at an end of my combination. Place over our heads with all theſe powers in their full force the Aſſembly of Maſſachuſets-Bay, what then? I fancy that we ſhould ſoon change a certain tune and ſing another ſong, than what we do now. Let me then moſt ſeriouſly queſtion any man, from whoſe breaſt all candour and juſtice are not totally baniſhed, where is as to liberty or property the difference between any of the caſes now ſuppoſed and that original one which has given occaſion to them. I ſpeak this no otherwiſe than with the utmoſt reverence and reſpect towards our own legiſlature; but are we to conceive or would it be a compliment to them or does

does any one mean to ſay, that they are not men or that they are to be excepted and exempted from the reaſons and the rules, which obtain and take place in the caſe of all the reſt of mankind?

One of the long robe may perhaps demand the exact time when theſe rights begin in riſing and growing ſtates to take place and how many years, months and days a colony muſt be firſt ſettled. I may venture to promiſe to reſolve ſuch an one; when he ſhall tell me in how many years, months and days an oaken plant grows to be an oaken tree or a boy becomes a man; which ſeem to be too much eaſier queſtions. The boundaries are ſeldom nicely diſtinguiſhable, where nature proceeds with an even and conſtant hand. But it is not difficult to anſwer that the event has already taken place, when near two millions of people are in full and peace-

able poſſeſſion of ſuch a country as is occupied by our North-American colonies.

It may likewiſe be aſked, whether theſe laws are applicable to all caſes of private property between man and man. But the full reſolution of this queſtion might demand a Spaniſh caſuiſt or a book as big as a volume of our ſtatutes at large. Any man may for me amuſe himſelf with trying the titles of nations to the territories and poſſeſſions, which they fill, enjoy and inhabit, as he would do thoſe between man and man about a houſe and garden and ſhould the proceſs in the firſt caſe laſt as long in proportion, as one does in the latter before ſome Courts of Juſtice in Europe, the defendants need not perhaps deſire a longer or ſurer poſſeſſion.

But may not theſe principles go far, if carried to the extent? That is indeed a very ſerious queſtion and perhaps well worthy

worthy of conſideration. Our colonies are content that we ſhould at our pleaſure regulate their trade provided that what we do is bona fide, really, truly and ſincerely for that pnrpoſe and that only; but they deny that we ſhall tax them. They aſſent and agree to the firſt; but they abſolutely refuſe the laſt. Theſe two different points do likewiſe not ſtand on the ſame foundation; they have to the one ſubmitted ever ſince their origin; it has been corroborated by their perpetual and conſtant conſent and acquieſcence; the other is a novelty, againſt which they have from its firſt attempt moſt ſtrongly proteſted and acted. Why cannot we therefore content us with the line drawn by themſelves and with the preſent eſtabliſhment, from which we receive ſuch prodigious benefit and advantage now ariſing and yearly encreaſing? But may not they in time extend their objections to this alſo? The courſe of things and

the flux of years will certainly produce very many things more extraordinary than that. All the whole of our colonies muſt no doubt one day without force or violence fall off from the parent ſtate, like ripe fruit in the maturity of time. The earth itſelf having had a beginning, cannot but decay likewiſe, paſs away and have an end. But why ſhould we be over-curious about objects perhaps very far remote and diſturb ourſelves about a futurity which does not affect us and the diſtance of which, we don't know. Why ſhould we ſhake the fruit unripe from the tree, becauſe it will of courſe drop off, when it ſhall be ripe. Every time has its own circumſtances, according to which the events of it muſt be provided for, when they happen. That cannot now be done. New and unreaſonable demands, injuſtice, oppreſſion, violence on our parts will forward and haſten theſe events even before their time; let us withold our

hands

hands from theſe things; we have never yet had reaſon to boaſt ourſelves of ſuch expedients nor, let me add, ever to repent us of the contrary conduct.

There are no doubt in all governments many moſt important points unſettled and undetermined; ſuch in particular as relate to the limits between the power of the Sovereign and the obedience of the Subject. This muſt always be the caſe between Kings and their People, principal States and their dependencies, Mother Countries and their Colonies. It is very much the part of every prudent ruler, whether the Firſt Miniſter of a Prince or any other to avoid with the utmoſt care and ſolicitude all meaſures, which may poſſibly bring any ſuch critical circumſtances into public debate and diſpute. It is always a bad ſign when ſuch conteſts ariſe; they cannot do ſo without the diſorder of the whole, but they are to the

Sovereign

Sovereign in particular ever dangerous and often fatal. They may perhaps be compared to gunpowder, than whose grain nothing is more harmleſs, while it is at reſt; but let it be put into action and it will make the wildeſt ravages all around or overthrow the ſtrongeſt bulwarks and fortifications.

To how many of theſe queſtions did our Charles the Firſt give in his time riſe or occaſion and how dearly did he abide it! How many points of this ſort are undetermined between Great-Britain and Ireland, which are now to our mutual happineſs intirely dormant, but which ſtarted and purſued with obſtinacy and eagerneſs might make one or both of the iſlands run with blood. They need perhaps be no further looked for, than certain doctrines formerly advanced by Mr. Molyneux on the one hand and the law of Poinings on the other.

But

But it has pleaſed Providence to ſhelter us hitherto from this miſchief. It is not now perhaps many months, ſince we did not want an opportunity to have engaged in one ſuch. The alterations of a late bill from that country were only accidental. But does any one doubt, whether ſome forward man might not have been found, who would on occaſion have furniſhed reaſons better or worſe to maintain the right of making them. But how much more prudent was our conduct? If peace and harmony are then ſo beneficial and deſirable between Great-Britain and Ireland and the meaſures producing or inſuring them good, upright and wiſe; why do theſe things ſo alter their nature, when they are applied to America?

The preſent accurſed queſtion between us and our colonies how long was it unknown or unthought of! Who heard of

it from the firſt riſe of thoſe ſettlements, until a very few years ago; that a fatal attempt forced it into notice and importance. But it is now already ſetting at work fleets and armies; it threatens the confuſion and perhaps the deſtruction of both countries and but too probably of one of them; although God only knows whether the calamity will fall on that of the two, which many men may now imagine and believe to be the moſt in danger.

This point is not alone; there are other queſtions of the ſame ſort, concerning which no man now diſturbs himſelf; but which ſtirred and ſtarted by new demands or any other means might in like manner band againſt one another Great-Britain and its Colonies. Princes and States never do better, than when their claims are not fathomed nor if I may uſe the expreſſion, the bottom of them over-curiouſly ſounded and examined.

The

The terms of municipal laws uſually favour the Sovereign, they are often framed or drawn by his creatures and dependents; the law of nature is more commonly in ſupport of the people and the publick; it is the production of him who ſees with an equal eye, Prince and Subject, High and Low, European and American. God forbid, that two ſuch parts of the Britiſh empire, as the mother-country and her colonies ſhould in our times divide and contend againſt one another on the ſanction of theſe two different laws, which ought in every ſtate to be conſtantly blended and united and which can never without its utter diſorder and confuſion be made to ſtrike and to claſh againſt each other. Whenever that ſhall happen, let us be aſſured, that we are running upon a rock, whereon we cannot but make ſhipwreck.

I have hitherto on the law of nature and the common rights of humanity conſidered the claim of the Americans not to be here in England taxed by us againſt their own will and conſent. It reſts firmly on that foundation; but I don't mean to ſay that it reſts on that only. Could this be removed, there would yet remain another on which it would nevertheleſs ſtand ſure and unſhaken; I mean that of the Special Conſtitution of Great-Britain, which does herein moſt juſtly and wiſely coincide with the general conſtitution of humanity and require that the property of no man living under its protection ſhould without his conſent by himſelf or repreſentative be taken from him or according to the language of the times, that repreſentation ſhould go along with taxation.

But this argument has particularly been in the hands of the firſt men of our times.

They

They have ſet it in its full light and their authority has recommended it to the attention of their country. It is well known and well underſtood and I am perſuaded that it is unanſwerable. But I bear more reſpect both to thoſe perſons and to the public, than to go over it again ſo much to its diſadvantage. I will therefore beg leave only to aſſume this reaſon and to join it to my former; when the right of the Americans will ſtand on this double foundation of the general law of nature and of the particular conſtitution of Great-Britain.

However it has been ſaid, that the Americans are in our Parliament virtually repreſented. How that ſhould be when they are not really ſo, I ſhall leave to be explained by thoſe who advance it. But God forbid, that the condition of Britiſh ſubjects ſhould ever be ſuch, as for a whole people of them to be in danger

of

of being ſtripped of all their properties only by the logick of ſuch an unmeaning word or diſtinction, as that is.

But what are the exact bounds and limits of real repreſentation? I will excuſe myſelf from entering into that queſtion. But will an American ſcruple to ſay; that if in any future time things ſhould here at home be from their preſent ſtate ſo far changed and the conſtitution of Great Britain ſo loſt, that a great majority of its Repreſentatives ſhall be named by a handful of needy men; that they ſhall moſt evidently and moſt notorioufly be both choſen by a corrupt and undue influence and be afterwards guided and governed by the ſame; ~~he~~ will he not ſay, that it may at that diſtant day better become ſuch a mock Repreſentative to prove their own right of taxing Britain, than to pretend to tax America?

So

So much for conſent and repreſentation. But there is another ground, whereon the Americans likewiſe rely, which is that of their own provincial charters. I ſhall leave the particulars of this ſubject to themſelves, who are beſt acquainted with them. However I will in general ſay, that theſe charters are no doubt in aid and aſſiſtance of the two ſanctions before mentioned very properly brought for the ſhortening and ſilencing of diſputes and debates by the producing the ſpecial authority of government. But they muſt be interpreted by thoſe before-mentioned and conſiſtently with them. They cannot be conſtrued ſo as to overturn the others. It would be the moſt downright abſurdity and the moſt direct contradiction in itſelf, to talk of a Grant or Patent or Charter of rights given to any one to take away all the rights he had in the world, to confer on him the privilege of having nothing of his own now nor of

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being able to acquire any ſuch thing in time to come, neither he himſelf or his deſcendants after him. Every thing of this kind muſt be underſtood ſo as to coincide with the original, inherent rights of any ſingle perſon or community, whether as men or as Britons.

Charters would without doubt be for ſome purpoſes very effectual, if every thing would take place as it is written on a paper or parchment. Suppoſe a parcel of miſerable people ſtarved out of their native country or perſecuted and proſecuted there, becauſe they don't believe juſt what ſome other men do or pretend to do; that they cannot leave their homes without the conſent of their perſecutors; that they muſt take with them a piece of parchment, did their tyrants write thereon, that their deſcendants ſhall go upon all fours, ſhall be born with hoofs inſtead of hands and with inſtinct inſtead of reaſon

and

and the faculty of ſpeech and that theſe things would ſo happen; this might to be ſure give very notable powers over them; they might then be yoked as horned cattle, ſaddled and bridled as horſes or fleeced and ſheared as ſheep; the difference in the ſpecies would naturally and neceſſarily effect this; but nothing of all this will come to paſs. This future offspring will notwithſtanding be born with the nature, the qualities and the talents and conſequently with the claims, the rights and privileges of men. But ſuppoſe theſe ſtrange terms to be on account of the abſurdity of them dropped, but that there are inſtead really entered on the parchment or charter ſuch an arbitrary ſuperiority, ſuch deſpotic and uncontroulable powers and prerogatives over theſe poor people and their poſterity, as are only fitting, ſuitable and analogous to the former circumſtances, will this in right or in reaſon be a whit more valid than the

other for where is the ſenſe or juſtice in demanding ſuch enormous conſequences, when we are forbidden the unnatural premiſes, from which alone they can follow? Suppoſe that it was on a paper or parchment written in fair characters; that the horſes and other cattle of the New Foreſt in Hampſhire ſhould have to them and their heirs for ever the ſaid Foreſt and it might be added to hold in free ſoccage of the manor of Eaſt-Greenwich; ſuppoſe that dents were made in the paper or parchment and a ſtamp put upon it and that it was ſigned ſealed and delivered as an act and deed; what would be the effect? It will be anſwered that it would be a thing to laugh at; for how ſhould brute beaſts take property, who have neither underſtanding or capacity or any means for that purpoſe; that it would be contrary to nature for them ſo to do. But let me demand in my turn, where is the difference in the effect, whether it is written

ten that beaſts ſhall become men or that men ſhall become beaſts; that a number of beaſts ſhall be able to take and hold property or that a community of men ſhall not? The one is juſt as contrary to nature as the other. It might indeed be a happy day for deſpotiſm, could ſuch things be done; but they are beyond its ſtrength. The great Author of the world has for the tranſcendent purpoſes of his unfathomable wiſdom placed in the hearts of men, pride, ambition, avarice and ſelf-intereſt; but he has at the ſame time been pleaſed with his moſt benevolent hand and by the laws of nature and the courſe of things to ſet bounds to the power of theſe paſſions, which they can paſs no more, than the ſea can exceed its ſhores.

So much for charters in general. However I will likewiſe ſay ſomething concerning one particular charter before I leave the ſubject. When the havock

among charters happened in England a ſhort time before the revolution and which contributed not a little to produce that event, America was not ſpared. About the year ſixteen hundred eighty-four a quo warranto was on that head iſſued againſt Maſſachuſet's-Bay. Some of the colonies did on the like occaſion give way and throw themſelves on the pleaſure of the King. Maſſachuſet's-Bay refuſed to do this. They were ex parte and for non-appearance condemned and their charter ſhared the ſame fate as that of the city of London and ſo many others. Four years afterwards the Revolution happened. As ſoon as ever the news of it arrived at Boſton the colony declared in favour of it. They took poſſeſſion of King James's Governor and of the reſt of his creatures and ſent them all home to England. But then it will perhaps be ſaid, they recovered in return their charter. Is there almoſt faith in man to believe otherwiſe?

Other

Other colonies fared well enough, who had not withſtood the will of the King, and whoſe charters had not been vacated in the court of juſtice. They did themſelves put them again in execution and no words were made. Our own charters here at home were likewiſe returned. The colony of Maſſachuſett's-Bay went on that account firſt into the Convention Parliament; but there they could not get through. It is well known that our Parliaments are not uſually diſſolved or prorogued, while any buſineſs is depending, which there is an inclination to paſs. They had then nothing left but to beg and pray of the King's Miniſters. But is it credible that they could not procure the reſtoration of their charter of theſe Revolution Miniſters, of theſe Makers and Unmakers of Kings, who had ſo lately been on the ſame bottom with them and in whoſe cauſe the colony had ſo readily

declared

declared itſelf, but who had now obtained their own ends? Tired out therefore with delays and not being ſure of the worſt that might happen, they were obliged in the end to accept of a new charter mutilated and caſtrated of many of the moſt important and eſſential privileges of the old. I ſhall take notice of no other particulars, than that before they choſe annually their own Governor, Deputy-Governor and Secretary. Theſe were from this time to be appointed during pleaſure by the King. Of what extreme conſequence the change in the nomination of theſe their three Chief Officers has proved to them, no man at all acquainted with the name of Maſſachuſet's-Bay can be ſo ignorant of their hiſtory, as not to be informed and ſenſible. Hence their differences with their own Governors there and with our Miniſters at home. Hence their preſent Military Governor and the armies and fleets now gone or going againſt them.

them. Hence the ſtrange proviſion ſaid to be in agitation, that their blood may not be liable to be anſwered for there. They would otherwiſe in all appearance be at this moment on theſe ſubjects in the ſame ſituation, as their neighbours of Connecticut and Rhode-Iſland, with whoſe charters their own agreed, until they loſt it by their reſiſtance and oppoſition to the will of the two laſt Stuarts; when the others ſaved theirs by giving way. I ſhall leave my readers to judge, whether it was the good or the evil contained in this poor piece of parchment which thus united againſt it Stuart-Kings and Revolution-Miniſters. But this charter muſt certainly have been granted under an evil planet, if what ſome people ſay be true; that it is now again under diſpleaſure at home and on the brink of being once more reverſed and altered. But that event has not on the writing of this happened. I am therefore perfectly perſwaded,

ſwaded, that ſhould any thing of that kind take place, it will on the contrary be the reſtoration of thoſe its former privileges and powers, which was ſo unreaſonably and ſo unjuſtly denied at the Revolution. But let any one conſider this hiſtory of a charter and then reflect, whether mankind have not reaſon to bleſs themſelves, that they have ſome rights of a higher nature than charters, ſuperior to them and independent of them.

But are not we the parent country? That is a very reſpectable word, but ſo likewiſe is the relation of it mutual. It has always hitherto had its full weight with our colonies of North-America and will probably continue to have, if we can content ourſelves with any tolerably reaſonable ſenſe and uſe of it. But was every maſter and miſtreſs of a family reſident there the immediate ſon and daughter of a father and mother living now at this time

time in England; yet they being gone from us and having eſtabliſhed themſelves and got families of their own and having acquired a large territory, we could by no means even as true and real parents make out any claim having ſuch conſequences, as that which we advance. However the fact is very different; they left us in former times a part of the publick, as well as others; they are ſince become hardly our couſin's couſins and no man knows how far we might mount towards Adam or Noah to ſettle the real relation between us. But was their hiſtory told, as it deſervs: How they have made theſe their great eſtabliſhments at their own charge and with almoſt no expence of ours: How we have ever had the total command of the produce of that immenſe country, ſo as to regulate the commerce and exportation of it merely according to our own advantage and convenience; that this is grown to be an object of perhaps no leſs

than four millions ſterling a year, all turned towards our profit; could the extreme benefit be all ſet forth, which we have by this means received from the firſt foundation of theſe colonies to this time and the chearfulneſs, fidelity and loyalty wherewith they have ſubmitted to this; the ſincere and warm friendſhip and affection, which they have ever born us, while we kept ourſelves within theſe bounds; the aſſiſtance which we have received from them in war, as well as the profits in peace; could all theſe circumſtances be with very many others favourable to them told and repreſented together and in their full light, the ſtory itſelf would bid fair to make theſe harſh and unmerited Acts of Parliament drop out of our hands, if we held them at the time. However at leaſt don't let us extend a figurative and metaphorical ſaying to the diveſting of all their properties near upon two millions of people and make it at the

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ſame time a warrant for ourſelves to hold towards them an unjuſt, rapacious and unnatural conduct, directly contrary to that of real parents towards their children and totally inconſiſtent with the expreſſion, whereon we would ground our pretenſions.

But how do theſe projectors and promoters of taxes and taxing hold concerning Ireland? Do they reckon that to be likewiſe within the juriſdiction of their ways and means and in the ſame predicament with America? Adventurers went formerly from hence, others ſucceeded, more followed, until they were maſters of the iſland. It might be added, that this was done with a much greater expence of the blood and treaſure of this country than our ſettlements in America ever coſt us. The Repreſentative Body of Ireland is called a Parliament; that of America an Aſſembly. The term of kingdom obtains

in one country and that of colony in the other. Is there any charm in the found of theſe words which makes a difference or would the author of the Stamp Act have gone thither alſo; had the people of America ſhewn a facility to his firſt attempts with them and if the Parliament of Ireland had ever made difficulties to his future demands there? Does any one imagine that learned or other arguments would have been wanting to maintain the rectitude of the one meaſure, any more than of the other?

But is there any medium? Muſt not we either rigorouſly enforce obedience from our colonies or at once generouſly declare them free and independent of all allegiance to the crown of Great Britain? To which I anſwer, if there is a medium between Great Britain and Ireland, why may there not be alſo between Great Britain and North America. The claims of

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the colonies are not higher than thoſe of Ireland. Certain rules of mutual reſpect preſerved between us and that neighbouring part of the King's dominions keep us on the beſt and happieſt terms together, terms of perpetual and almoſt unſpeakable profit and advantage to England. Does this overturn the conſtitution of Great Britain or weaken the dependency on its crown, as ſome language has been? Why ſhould not then forbearance, moderation and regard towards that a little more diſtant portion of our country produce in the one caſe effects conſonant and anſwerable to what the like cauſes do in the other. It is moſt evident and may in general be depended on, that no evil conſequences can happen from any condition or ſituation between Great Britain and her colonies, which does actually and advantageouſly obtain between Great Britain and Ireland. How was it there twenty years ago, before the firſt or

the laſt of theſe taxes were either of them thought of? All was then peace, calm and content. The repealing the firſt of them, the Stamp Act, did that do any miſchief? Not unleſs the reconciling, uniting and connecting again all the parts of our government be ſuch. There was hardly any where to be found a man, but who was pleaſed and happy in the meaſure; except a miniſter or two at home, who loſt their power and their places on the occaſion and except a few ſycophants abroad, who hoped to recommend themſelves by traducing and diſturbing thoſe, to whom they owed aſſiſtance and protection and who deſired to fiſh in troubles, which they themſelves contributed greatly to create. What evil ſtar reigns then at this period, that theſe bleſſings cannot now take place, as they formerly did?

I have on this ſubject no mind to play with the name of Ireland. I preſume to intro-

introduce on the ſcene and to couple, as it were, with America that country only in order to expoſe the more plainly by the inſtance of the one ſome notions advanced concerning the other and at the ſame time to the utmoſt of my ſmall power to recommend, inculcate and enforce that cautious, conſiderate, brotherly and affectionate conduct towards each, which I am ſure that they both of them moſt exceedingly well deſerve, whether of the government or of the people of England.

It is ſometimes made a claim on the Americans, that we incurred on their account a great expence in the late war. On whoſe account have we not ſince the Revolution incurred a great expence? Our whole hiſtory from that time to this is little elſe, but a ſcene of prodigality in the ſervice of different People or Princes, for which no man can give any good reaſon. However I anſwer on this occaſion

caſion with the fact. We did not engage in the late war at the requeſt of the Americans nor upon any deſire or inclination of theirs. The language at the time was on the contrary, that the leſs concerned the inhabitants of our colonies appeared to be about the incroachments of the French, the more reaſon we had to be jealous on the ſubject. I believe, that I may in ſupport of what I am ſaying venture to appeal to thoſe, who are the beſt acquainted with that period. Had it been otherwiſe, we ſhould no doubt have heard enough of it. Subſtantial reaſons might be given, that the Americans judged better in the caſe, than we. There may be ground for us to condemn ourſelves for not having conſulted them more on the ſubject, than we did, before that we were ſo haſty to take up the hatchet. However there is not the leaſt pretence for charging to their account the conſequences of a war, which we undertook without any in-

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ſtance and application from them and entirely of our own motion.

But the honour of Government is concerned. That is certainly an unaccountable reaſoning, though not perhaps very uncommon; that if Government or in plain Engliſh, the Miniſter and thoſe about him do a thing which ſhall be wiſhed to be undone, they are therefore to proceed in the ſame road and do many more ſuch, until at length the caſe may perhaps be beyond redreſs. Surely the more credit is loſt the deeper that people are plunged into miſchief. The welfare and happineſs of five or ſix millions of mankind or more is a prodigious object. Whoever puts himſelf at the helm of our State undertakes in a manner for that. We are all mortal and fallible. One in ſuch a ſituation had need to march with the utmoſt caution, circumſpection and foreſight; ſhould he make an unlucky ſtep, it is his higheſt duty to endeavour inſtantly to retreat and

retrieve it. A late Miniſter repealed an Act ſimilar to the one in queſtion and that Stateſman well knew what to do and what to avoid. In the preſent caſe a gulph is before us, which will not admit many ſteps forwards, but that the Government and the Public will both go headlong.

But their outrages. I preſume theſe to be an object of diſcourſe, as well as any other ſubject; how can they otherwiſe be diſcuſſed and conſidered? However I ſhall without declaring any opinion of my own take them up only in the light, as they may appear to an American. He will certainly ſay, that theſe receive their complexion from the claim of the colonies not to be taxed by us and accordingly as that ſhall be grounded or not. If that is not well founded, that then their whole oppoſition is unlawful, whether only concert and combination or force or violence. That the latter indeed may be productive of

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more miſchief than the former, but that they are on ſuch a ſuppoſition both of them entirely unwarrantable. I would in this caſe willingly ſpeak freely but without offence; he would therefore certainly add, that ſhould the Americans on the other hand have a real right not to be ſo taxed, they are undoubtedly intitled likewiſe to the neceſſary means of uſing and enjoying that right. That this is a rule of the law of nature as well as of the law of the land or rather that the latter has only borrowed it from the former. I ſpeak with great ſubmiſſion; but he would without doubt proceed, that the means uſed on this occaſion were abſolutely thoſe neceſſary ones and no other; that an object was artfully or judiciouſly choſen for this tax, which is ſo conſtant a part of diet or luxury, that it was totally impoſſible to prevent the tax from taking place without hindering the commodity itſelf from being introduced; that therefore the

Americans muſt abſolutely do that or loſe their right; that the endeavouring to do it by a general concert and agreement would have been no better than building a city out of the ſands of the ſea; that thereupon the town of Boſton did at a ſort of public meeting uſe every inſtance and application poſſible both with the Captains of the tea ſhips and with the Governor, that the tea might be returned, untouched and undamaged as it came; that this would have ſecured their right and they deſired no more; that this was abſolutely refuſed; that there was thereupon no expedient left for the preſerving their right but deſtroying the tea; that this was without any expreſs authority of the town done by private people, but in all appearance with the general inclination and with the leaſt miſchief and damage poſſible; that there was ſome tea ſpilt, but no blood; that this refers the whole to the firſt and original queſtion of

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the right; that the Americans make thereon the ſame claim, as the people of Scotland would have in an eſſential circumſtance of the Union or thoſe of Ireland, ſhould the line obſerved between them and Great-Britain be paſſed in any point, which would affect their whole intereſt and welfare, as a nation; that in the other colonies the Governors and Captains conſented to the ſending back the tea or ſhutting it up in ſuch a manner as never to be ſold or diſperſed; that theſe did not therefore in their caſes make immediate force neceſſary, but that their act was in effect the ſame and ſtands on the ſame ground. That there is nothing malignant in the whole matter, nothing but a determined deſire to ſupport this their great and neceſſary right. This is no doubt the American idea, as appears by many proofs and papers from that ſide of the water. I ſhall myſelf preſume to ſpeak no opinion in the caſe, much leſs will I

call again on the manes of our anceſtors in ſupport of this pretenſion. But ſhould it be obſerved, that it ends in a queſtion, which concerns the bounds and limits of government; I cannot on the occaſion but repeat and enforce by this example the remark before made, of how dangerous and deadly a nature the diſputes and conteſts are, which lead thither.

So much for the rectitude of taxing the Americans! But I may be told that I have not yet touched the true point, that I have been doing little more, than a man, who rides poſt out of his road. That Stateſmen and Politicians do indeed ſometimes talk of the right and wrong, of the juſtice and injuſtice of meaſures; but that this is all only oſtenſible reaſoning, while there may be at the botton nothing, which they really care leſs about. That the Great do every where bear hard on the Little, the ſtrong on the weak. That

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the hawk hunts the partridge, the lion the wolf and the wolf the lamb; that powerful Princes and States oppreſs the Helpleſs and the High and the Rich thoſe beneath them; that this is the courſe of the world and the chapter of the law of nature, which we intend to conſult and to follow; that we want money at home; that our debts are very heavy and our reſources but too nearly at an end; that we have yet fleets and armies and are determined to bend to our will our colonies of America and to make them ſubſervient to our wants and occaſions; that this is at the bottom and that all my caſuiſtry may in the mean time ſerve the purpoſes of grocers and paſtry-cooks; that if people muſt write about matters of ſtate, they ought do it like men. Very well; I join iſſue hereon, only don't let us go too faſt; one thing at a time.

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I anſwer that you cannot force them nor is there any appearance that you can. The number of free people in thoſe colonies is reckoned at towards two millions. The common calculation is of one fencible or fighting man, in five perſons and this is ſuppoſed to be rather under than over the truth. This will give us at leaſt between three and four hundred thouſand fighting men on the number before mentioned. Mr. Rome tells us indeed in ſome letters &c. lately publiſhed in oppoſition to the colonies; "that there is "hardly any thing more common, than "to hear them boaſt of particular colo- "lonies that can raiſe on a ſhort notice "a hundred thouſand fighting men." However to have nothing to do with theſe exaggerations and to take only the number before mentioned; what expectation can there be of ſending from hence an army fit to ſubdue that continent, a country not defended indeed on the ſide

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of the ſea with forts and caſtles built by men, but extreamly ſtrong within by the natural fortifications of foreſts and of rivers.

But can they arm ſo many? In any country very greatly taxed and much more ſo than its inhabitants would willingly bear with, it is impoſſible conſiſtently with ſuch a ſtate of things to arm the whole body of the people. Theſe might be apt to count noſes and to conſider, who were the ſtronger, they themſelves or the tax-gatherers and the Red-coats or White-coats or Black-coats or any other, who ſupport them. The difficulty would be yet greater, were there any further diſſatisfaction. But theſe are all democratical governments, where the power is in the hands of the people and where there is not the leaſt difficulty or jealouſy about putting arms into the hands of every man in the country.

But are they united among themſelves? In the cauſe of not being taxed by us it is well underſtood, how much they are ſo. All accounts and reports from thence of all men and of all parties run in that ſtile and concur in that circumſtance. It was ſo experienced to a very great degree concerning the Stamps and has now been found the ſame on the occaſion of the Tea. Their conduct has in the caſe been every where alike and correſpondent. The Tea is either returned without being landed or received without being ſuffered to be ſold, at New-York, at Penſylvania, at Carolina, at all the places to which it was ſent. We reckon entirely without our hoſt, if we don't expect to have to do with a union of that continent or depend on any meaſures inſufficient to ſubdue the whole,

But let me aſk; how can we expect otherwiſe? They are not unacquainted with

with the hiſtory of the mother-country. They know the weight of the taxing hand here. They have heard of our debt of one hundred and forty millions of pounds ſterling incurred ſince the Revolution beſides other hundreds of millions ſpent currently within the ſame period. The time to come is to be judged of by the time paſt. Will our brethren of America expect, that this hand ſhould be lighter on them at a diſtance or that our breaſts will feel more for them than for ourſelves? Let an Engliſhman make the caſe his own and queſtion himſelf; what he ſhould think were he of that country and his whole fortune and concerns there. Would not he believe his all to be at ſtake upon the caſt? Does any one in America or in England imagine, that all theſe diſputes and feuds are only at the bottom about a duty of threepence upon a pound of tea? How can then any candid man doubt, whether there will be a general union

and concurrence on the ſubject or wonder if there is ſo?

They are ſaid to have already Committees of Correſpondence and no doubt neceſſity will teach them other means of moving and acting together. Every thing is there by choice and election; they will probably have at their head, as capable and as wiſe men, as are to be found among them. The power and influence of Governors and other civil officers appointed from hence, muſt on an open rupture have an end. Our authority would perhaps then extend little further, than where it was enforced by our own troops.

But what are an untrained and undiſciplined multitude? Could not an experienced officer with a few regular regiments do what he would in America? I anſwer, that a different ſtory may be told. In the

war

war before laſt our meaſures directed at home were every where unſucceſsful. The plains of Flanders were fatten'd with ſome of the beſt blood of Britain and of Ireland. Our government was ſhaken almoſt to the foundation by a rebellion contemptible in its beginning. Were we more fortunate in our attempt by ſea againſt Pondicherry or that afterwards againſt Port l'Orient? But the people of New England maintained at that time the honour of our arms. It is well known, that they carried on with their own counſels and with their own ſoldiery and under the command of one of their own planters againſt Cape Breton and Louiſbourg an expedition, the event of which need not now be told. We did not begin in a much better manner the laſt war. I am unwilling to call to mind our firſt campaigns in Germany, our ſituation and treaty of Cloſter-Seven, the fate of Minorca or the hiſtories of Bradock and Aber-

bercrombie. But who were at that time the firſt to ſtem the tide of our ill-fortune? Was not it an American militia, who commanded by Sir William Johnſon a gentleman at that time of the country, met, fought and beat the French and Indians under Monſieur Dieſkau and made priſoner their commander? But what wonders were afterwards done by our people properly conducted and directed? It is very true, and I am ſure, that I have no inclination to depreciate them. But neither did thoſe of America want their ſhare therein. However the courage of our countrymen was never yet queſtioned; but may they always unite and employ it againſt our common enemies and never be encamped or embattled againſt one another either in America or any where elſe.

But we are maſters at ſea and where-ever our ſhips can come. We may do, what-

whatever a fleet can. Very true; but it cannot fail all over North-America. It is ſaid, that Marſhal Saxe had before the declaration of the laſt war but one and at the time of our army being in Germany conceived a deſign to have landed on our coaſt with ten thouſand men and to have tried the fortune of a briſk march to London. He did not find this ſo eaſy to execute, as he thought for. He was moſt happily diſappointed. But there was an object. No one can tell the conſequence, had he ſucceeded. The preſent is a very different matter. No immediate impreſſion upon the town of Boſton nor poſſeſſion taken of it by means of a fleet nor the ſame circumſtance with regard to any other towns of America liable thereto by their ſituation will carry the command of that whole continent or force it to ſubmit to meaſures ſo univerſally againſt their bent and inclination.

It may however be ſaid, that this is not the plan. The charter of the town of Boſton is to be changed and their trade ſuſpended and other meaſures of the very ſtrongeſt ſort to be enforced againſt them; The moving mountain is according to the imagination of Dr. Swift to hang over them and the ſun not to ſhine or the rain or the dew to fall on them, until they are brought to ſubmiſſion and made to the reſt of America an example of the danger of refractorineſs and diſobedience to the mother country; all which we think may and will with time be compaſſed and accompliſhed.

This is indeed as to the queſtion of force the true point of the matter; I mean, which will at laſt and at the end of a long trial get the better; but I add, that this will probably not be Great-Britain. Here I muſt again crave leave to write with freedom. If it is the firſt

wiſdom

wiſdom of a private man to know himſelf; ſo muſt it likewiſe be that of a State to conſider in all its meaſures its own condition and ſituation. The ſearching into our circumſtances neither makes or mars them. But what muſt be our caſe, ſhould we have any wound or miſchief and that it might not be probed or examined? We muſt ever ſuppoſe our adverſaries to be informed and not by ſhutting our own eyes pretend to blind other people. I ſhall therefore without ſcruple enquire into the ſtate of the public, as far as it concerns my ſubject.

The condition of the great ſtaple manufactures of our country is well known. Thoſe of the linen and the ſilk are in the greateſt diſtreſs and the woollen and the linen are now publickly banded and contending againſt one another. One part of our people is ſtarving at home on the alms of their pariſhes and another running

ning abroad to this very country, that we are contending with. The produce of North-America uſed to be ſent yearly to Britain is reckoned at about four millions ſterling; the manufactures of Britain and other commodities returned from hence at nearly the ſame ſum; the debts due from people in America to the Britiſh merchants here at about ſix millions or a year and a half of that commerce. I ſay, the time paſt muſt be our guide with reſpect to that to come. Suppoſing therefore the Americans to act in this caſe, as they did in that of the Stamp Act; we ſhall then have yearly until the final ſettlement of this affair manufactures to the value of four millions ſterling left and heaped on the hands of our merchants and maſter-manufacturers or we ſhall have workmen and poor people put out of employ and turned adrift in that proportion. There will likewiſe be withdrawn from our home conſumption and

out

out of our general trade and traffick North American commodities to the ſame value, and debts will to the immenſe ſum above mentioned be with-held from private people here. This was the train of things begun before and we muſt look for the like again. What effects theſe things will produce conſidering the preſent ſtate of our trade, manufactures and manufacturers, the condition of our poor at home and the numbers of our people running abroad, it don't want many words to explain and ſet forth. They were before very ſeverely felt for the time, that they laſted and it is apprehended, that the preſent ſituation of the Public is yet more liable to the impreſſion. Theſe are ſome of the difficulties and diſtreſſes which we are for the ſake of a trial of ſkill with our colonies going to bring on ourſelves and which muſt be perpetually magnifying and increaſing, as long as the unnatural conteſt ſhall continue.

To theſe a former adminiſtration gave way; but it is to be ſuppoſed, that the preſent has by returning to the ſhock reſolved to be more callous on the occaſion and to leave the Americans, the merchants and the manufacturers to ſettle among themſelves their matters, as they may. Our people will indeed be leſs clamorous about the ears of their betters if they ſhall all run and emigrate out of the kingdom. But there is a circumſtance not yet mentioned, which will bid fair to go further and which may but too probably involve in one common confuſion the nation, the government and the adminiſtration itſelf. I mean the danger of a diſorder or failure of the public revenue, the difficulty or impoſſibility to pay the intereſt of the debt, the navy, the army, the civil liſt and our other expences; if the preſent contention ſhall proceed and continue.

I deſire

I desire in explanation of this to consider our present income, our out-goings and our resources. I will not enter into any detail thereon; the particulars in gross will be sufficient for the purpose before us. I will however in order to be the better understood premise something about the revenue in general. It may be divided into two parts, the one of taxes laid in perpetuity, the other of such as are granted by the year and for the year. The first part consists of all our taxes in general whatsoever, except the Land-tax and the annual Malt-tax; the latter consists of these two only. Perpetual taxes are now in the language of Europe often expressed by the name of funds, as affording a fixed and settled foundation for any special use and particularly for that of borrowing money. It was to answer the interest of our debts, that our own funds were established and they are now pledged for that purpose. These of ours have

been

been chiefly thrown into three great common ones called the General, the Aggregate and the South Sea Funds. Theſe are ſometimes with all other funds or perpetual taxes whatſoever deſtined and ſettled for the diſcharge of the intereſt of our debt comprehended and united together in diſcourſe and called the Sinking Fund; although there is in reality no one particular Fund of that name, any more than there is ſuch a piece of money as a pound ſterling or a French livre. The Civil Liſt is placed on the ſame Funds, as the intereſt of the Public Debt. What remains annually of the whole collection of thoſe Funds after the ſatisfying theſe two incumbrances is, what is meant by the ſurplus of the Sinking Fund. I have thought proper to preface theſe few things, that my own language may at leaſt be underſtood, in what little I ſhall ſay on the ſubject.

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The intereſt of our debt amounts to near upon five millions a year; all annuities for lives or years, every thing redeemable or irredeemable included. The Civil Liſt is eight hundred thouſand pounds a year. The ſurplus of the Sinking Fund is changing and uncertain, that being compoſed of very many variable parts. It is impoſſible to fix it, but I will at an average for the ſake of round numbers ſuppoſe it to be two millions and more, about as much more as will anſwer to what the intereſt of the debt may want of five millions. We ſhall then have about ſeven millions three quarters for the produce of our perpetual Taxes and Funds. Our annual taxes remain then only to be conſidered, which are eaſily reckoned; the Land-tax granted for a million and an half at three ſhillings in the pound, as it now is; the Malt-tax always granted at three quarters of a million. Theſe ſums put together give us

about

about ten millions of pounds ſterling, being our preſent annual national income and likewiſe our preſent annual national expence; including what may at times be paid towards the diſcharge of the Public Debt and beſides the collection, which is not to my preſent purpoſe. Should any one be of opinion, that the ſurplus of the Sinking Fund is either over charged or undercharged, he has my conſent to make ſuch addition to it or ſubtraction from it, as he ſhall pleaſe. Neither the one or the other will affect the argument which I am upon. Our receipts and diſburſments will in either caſe go hand in hand. I ſhall therefore without any more nice diſquiſition take theſe at the medium of about ten millions ſterling each.

So much for our income and our expences. Let us next conſider our reſources; I mean what reſources we may

be

be ſuppoſed to have in our power without creating any new debt. The firſt to occur will be the ſurplus of the Sinking Fund. We apply of courſe to this on almoſt all occaſions. We are by law obliged to diſcharge regularly the intereſt of our debt; but whatever we may be in prudence and a proper care of ourſelves and of thoſe after us, we are by no contract or engagement bound to do more or to pay off any part of the principal of it. This ſurplus is therefore one reſource; but itis ſuch no otherwiſe or further, than it can be ſpared from our current expences, towards which it is commonly in whole or in part taken. We can for our preſent purpoſe reckon only on ſo much of it, as might otherwiſe be employed towards leſſening the capital of our debt. We have now had twelve years of peace, in which time I reckon, that we have diſcharged about eight millions of that capital. This will therefore at an average

give us by the year two-thirds of a million or ſomething more than ſix hundred thouſand pounds. This is what we may look to for one of our reſources. But we have likewiſe another, which is the Land-tax. That is now at three ſhillings in the pound, but it is ſometimes at four. We may therefore count in caſe of exigency on one ſhilling more, that is on half a million. Theſe two ſums amount together to about one million one hundred thouſand pounds. Theſe are our reſources and without borrowing theſe are all.

Let us next turn in our thoughts, whether theſe eleven hundred thouſand pounds a year, being a little more than a tenth part of our preſent income, are likely to be ſufficient for this American occaſion. Fleets and armies, ſhips of war and regiments are the means, the Tip-ſtaves and the Conſtables, which are to execute the meaſures

meaſures in queſtion. A million goes but a very little way with us in ſuch articles. This buſineſs muſt in it include a ſuppoſition, that all our colonies, all our ancient colonies on that continent may in the progreſs of it be combined and united in one common aſſociation, intereſt and defence. There can be no reaſonable hopes of ſucceſs, nothing but mortification and diſappointment directly in view by proceeding on any plan, which does not comprehend the probability of that circumſtance. What a field is then here opened? Is our million or eleven hundred thouſand pounds to furniſh us there likewiſe? However theſe things concern only our expences. Let us conſider the other ſide of our ſituation; how much our income is at the ſame time likely to be leſſened. Four millions ſterling yearly of the produce of America; as many of the merchandize of Great-Britain; more of debts here at home withheld and kept back

from our duties, our cuſtoms and our exciſe. What an operation on the revenue! Is our million one hundred thouſand pounds to ſupply all this beſides? How is it poſſible either on the one hand, that a perſon having theſe circumſtances before his eyes ſhould ſet on foot the preſent meaſures againſt our colonies or on the other, that any one having capacity and underſtanding to be at the head of the government and adminiſtration of a great kingdom ſhould ſo overlook them? This ſeems to be like not diſcerning the ſun at noon-day or the moon and the ſtars by night.

There is from the general condition of our country, but too much reaſon to apprehend, that the public revenue is without theſe additional cauſes ſinking and decreaſing. This could not but add greatly to our difficulties in the ſituation before deſcribed. However it is to be

hoped,

hoped, that this is only ſurmiſe and opinion. I ſhall not take it into the preſent account; but moſt aſſuredly any one at the head of our affairs ought not to forget it in his, if it is true.

But it may be ſaid, that we will in the ſuppoſed exigency borrow as our predeceſſors have done before us. I anſwer, that this may very probably be then out of our power. I will not go upon a general diſcuſſion, whether we ſhould enter into another war, with the ſame credit we have hitherto had; although we may have but too much reaſon to reflect on that ſubject. But the conſideration properly before us is, what would be the ſtate of our credit under a revolt and ſeparation of our ſettlements in America, that great and eſſential ſource of our riches and revenue? Loans and money advanced to us have as yet been reckoned equally ſecure, there has been no doubt made

made of the regular payment of the intereſt nor in conſequence of a public market for the principal, whether we ſhould ourſelves happen to be more or leſs ſucceſsful on any occaſion, wherein we were at the time concerned and for which they were borrowed. They were as ſafe under the defeats and diſappointments of the war before, as upon the victories and conqueſts of the laſt. But things could not in this caſe but be much changed. The ſecurity of millions lent muſt depend upon the future chance and fortune of war. It might be made a doubt, what fruits would for ſome years to come be received from provinces mangled and mutilated in a ſevere conteſt decided to their diſadvantage, ſhould theſe at laſt return to us again; but no one could overlook, what muſt be the caſe ſhould the event terminate againſt us and end after an expence of much treaſure and blood in ſo fatal and ineſtimable a loſs on our ſide,

as

as that of theſe colonies would be. However no man knows, whether this affair might run into a very long trial. A general breach and defection of theſe colonies would cut the ſinews of our power. We could not moſt probably in ſuch a ſituation long continue to provide and pay the intereſt of our moſt enormous debt already incurred and ſubſiſting. It need not be repeated, that it is the aſſiſtance received from their commerce and produce, which enables us now to do it. Deprived of that it will be but to little purpoſe for us to be inventing new Funds at home. We have enow of them already. More would only run foul of one another. We may in that day without the operations of a war in America, without the ſending or ſupplying fleets or armies at a diſtance, without creating new debts, new Funds and new taxes have at our own homes from our actual ſituation

buſineſs on our hands, but too ſufficient to engage and employ us.

But it may be aſked, what will be the conſequence ſhould we from theſe cauſes become unable to pay the intereſt of our preſent debt. I will be bold to ſay, that there is no man living wiſe enough to anſwer that queſtion in its extent. Experience teaches men; but there is no preceding hiſtory or tradition of any ſtate or nation whatſoever, which can throw ſufficient light on that propoſition. There never was before in the world ſuch a debt contracted or ſubſiſting, as the Britiſh. Letters and books are older than money, I mean than gold and ſilver commonly current and having their weight known by a ſtamp. But there is no occaſion to ranſack ancient times on this ſubject. The diſcovery of Mexico and Peru and the poſſeſſion of them by the Spaniards is the æra from whence we are to date the beginning

ginning of the preſent plenty in Europe of theſe two precious metals, which command often individuals and ſometimes commonwealths and kingdoms. The art of Funding was formerly very confined. It is a ſucceſſion of Engliſh adminiſtrations, which has carried it to an extent never before known among men. It is a new experiment in a ſtate. There is no example of it in the annals of mankind. We are at a loſs where to look for the conſequences of ſuch an unprecedented and unheard of deficiency or bankruptcy, as this would prove. However we cannot but have before our eyes diſorder, anarchy and confuſion; the monied intereſt of the nation banded againſt the landed and the landed againſt the monied; rich monied men brought to beggary and the land drained of the utmoſt farthing which can be forced from it; every one catching, rending and providing for the preſent moment; our ma-

nufactures and commerce at a ſtand; the middling people emigrating out of our country and the poor in famine or in ſedition; foreigners preſſing for their demands and the Dutch particularly in rage and almoſt in madneſs for their countleſs millions truſted and hazarded in our country; perhaps at the ſame time our navy unmanned and our army in mutiny for want of pay. Who can withal tell the end; for the debt, the burthen and the demand will ever remain? There was a time, when the Romans had formerly withdrawn themſelves from this iſland, that the poſſeſſions became here through the weakneſs and helpleſſneſs of thoſe remaining the prize and the prey of all plunderers, pirates, robbers and conquerors who came and ſeized upon them; until that theſe people themſelves, the Danes, the Saxons and the Normans repleniſhed and ſtrengthened again the country. Whether the like ſcenes will on the

ſame

ſame ſpot be once more acted or what iſſue awaits us, he only knows in whoſe hands theſe events are. But we muſt neceſſarily expect that the diſtant or detached parts of our empire, will fall from us; the ſtronger and the bigger will probably provide for and govern themſelves, the weaker and the leſſer ſink away or ſeek another maſter. I don't at all mean that they have any inclination ſo to do, where we give no cauſe or provocation; but the reins of government will in ſuch a conjuncture of courſe and of themſelves drop out of our hands; we ſhall no longer be able to hold them. No man can tell, whether Great-Britain itſelf might at that time continue in one or whether it may again be ſplit and divided into two. There have not been wanting endeavours towards that end, I don't now pretend to decide at whoſe door this principally lies. It is not perhaps one man or one party only, that is in fault. There have been

on one hand moſt unjuſt and cruel perſecutions. High and ſtrong reſentments of theſe are no otherwiſe than natural and warrantable. But they have in one reſpect been carried to an unreaſonable extent. Reflections have been made and continued, where they are totally ungrounded and unmerited. They have hitherto been born with a national good ſenſe, that brings more honour to the parties, than all the ribaldry in the world can ever do them diſcredit. But who knows, how their effects may be felt in ſuch a time, as is before deſcribed? What a ſituation! Britain or England left alone with a debt of a hundred and forty millions ſterling on its head! How can any one have before his eyes ſuch an event yet run on the road, which leads directly towards it? We need not perhaps be nice in meaſuring our force with that of the Americans; the evil of ſuch a day will but too ſufficiently decide the conteſt.

But

But all is not yet ſaid which this ſubject demands. I have hitherto only conſidered us and our colonies as engaged between ourſelves, not a word has been ſaid of any foreign ſtate medling in the matter. That is yet behind. We muſt look upon our colonies in the light of the provinces of Holland when they contended with Spain. The wiſh, the hand of every man will be againſt us. I will not enter into a general diſcourſe of politics, how far it may be for the common good of mankind to ſplit great ſtates into ſmall ones, to divide them into a ſize fit to profit and benefit others, but not to overbear or diſtreſs them. Let us conſider the ſubject by examples familiar to us. Mexico and Peru are more diſtant from Great Britain, than our colonies of North America, from Spain or France; but were thoſe in a ſtate of defection and ſeparation from the Spaniards, I wonder, whether we ſhould find a way to approach them or to avail

ourſelves

ourſelves in any manner of that circumſtance. France was pretty well plumed in the laſt war; but nevertheleſs were the reviving or beginning ſettlements of Pondicherry, of Mauritius and Madagaſcar disjoined from it or its own continent broken once more into ſeveral different parts and ſeparate governments, would our endeavours contribute to unite them? Should Batavia, the Spice Iſlands and the Cape of Good Hope revolt from the United Provinces, would not Engliſhmen try to profit by the conjuncture? I will not touch on the Brazils, that may be a tender point. But would none of all mankind, neither French or Spaniards or Dutch or Portugueſe or Danes or Swedes, to ſay nothing of the Ruſſians or of the new maritime State of Pruſſia; would none of them all give directly or indirectly aid, aſſiſtance, encouragement, countenance or protection to our colonies? Would they not trade or traf-

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ſick with them, would they ſupply them with nothing wherewith to defend themſelves or offend us? Is it very practicable to watch and guard ſuch immenſe coaſts or do we with all the navy of England in our ports find this ſo eaſy, with reſpect to thoſe only of Kent and Suſſex at home? Did neither England or France ſupport formerly the ſeven United Provinces in their breach with Spain? Have the French at this time afforded no eſſential aſſiſtance to the Turks nor another nation to the Ruſſians, while each continues at peace with the enemies of their reſpective friends? Are the independence of the Britiſh colonies in North-America and their disjunction from Great-Britain no object to other nations; are not they in particular as much ſo to France as this Turkiſh and Ruſſian ſquabble? Was that nation formerly ever wanting to Scotland or inſenſible of its intereſt in aſſiſting that diviſion? I don't at all mean hereby to

ſignify

ſignify any attempts or endeavours of other Governments to take poſſeſſion of theſe colonies or any inability in them to defend themſelves from that circumſtance; but I mean the general deſire and inclination, which there would aſſuredly be in all Europe to ſee them disjoined from our nation and to become abſolute, diſtinct, unconnected, independent ſtates and governments in larger or in ſmaller portions and more or leſs like the preſent ſtates of Holland, as it ſhould happen. Were there in ſight ſuch a condition with reſpect to Mexico and Peru or the Dutch ſettlements in the Eaſt-Indies would not the Engliſh without inſiſting on becoming themſelves maſters thereof be moſt abundantly contented with their general advantage reſulting therefrom? It cannot be doubted, but that there will be found a conduct and actions conſequent and correſpondent to ſuch univerſal and

almoſt

almoſt unanimous views and wiſhes of mankind.

This is all ſaid on a ſuppoſition of peace. But what if one or more of the greateſt powers in Europe ſhould in a moſt critical and difficult moment declare war againſt us? Have France and Spain forgot the loſs of Canada and Georgia and the many defeats and diſgraces received in the laſt conteſt with us? Have they for their honour or intereſt no deſire of revenge nor that thoſe provinces ſhould again return to their own crowns? On whom does it depend whether it ſhall in the caſe ſuppoſed be war or peace? Is this to be determined at London, or at Madrid or Verſailles? Is it in the power and in the breaſt of ourſelves or of thoſe, who are moſt our rivals and whoſe enmity may be ſaid to be hardly yet cooled? Are four years paſt ſince we had two alarms? Is one year gone ſince we had one? Should

there now be happily at the head of one or other government a Perſonage inclined to peace; yet how uncertain are the days of every mortal and how are Princes, Miniſters or States tempted into action by circumſtances, opportunities and advantages? Let us well weigh what it is for a private man, but much more for a great nation to part with the means of their proſperity out of their own hands and to place it in the power and determination of thoſe, of whom they have on account of a long and ancient rivalſhip and the continuance of many bloody wars the utmoſt reaſon to be ſuſpicious and jealous.

We cannot too much conſider or reflect upon what happened between Spain and the Dutch Provinces at their breach and ſeparation. The Spaniſh Government conſiſted at that time, of Spain, of Portugal, of Mexico and Peru and other provinces of America, of the Spaniſh and

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Portugueſe being all the European ſettlements at that time in the Eaſt-Indies and of Flanders making ſeventeen provinces, whereof thoſe now united and then revolted were only ſeven. How unequal a match! But yet the battle was not to the ſtrong. The ſtory and event of their war are well known. I am not about to repeat them. How little did in the beginning the Spaniards or Portugueſe or even the Dutch themſelves dream that the latter would before long ſtrip and diveſt the former of the chief of theſe their ſettlements in the Eaſt-Indies and make them their own. They were nevertheleſs different nations, ſpoke different languages, had different cuſtoms and religions inconſiſtent together and were themſelves before the end extremely odious to one another. The Dutch obtain'd nothing except by force, victory and conqueſt. But ſurely we are well aware, how different things may in theſe reſpects be between

us and the Americans and how much to the advantage of the latter. We are one nation, with the ſame language, the ſame manners and the ſame religion. Their Seamen, their Soldiers, their People are ours and ours theirs. How eaſy will be the tranſition or the change of dependence, protection or government between one and the other. Our people do already and at this moment ſeek with them ſhelter and refuge from their domeſtic poverty and miſery. Should ever theſe our provinces in the events of chance and time come to look us in the face with any near equality, would it then be a very ſtrange thing, if they ſhould cauſe a general revolt of all or of almoſt all the ſeamen of the Britiſh Empire? Theſe might not look upon themſelves as engaging or acting againſt their country, but as chuſing between two parts of it. They will at their pleaſure diſtribute the titles of unreaſonable and unjuſt,

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of injured and oppreſſed. The beſt terms and the beſt treatment will not fail to carry the greater numbers. There is perhaps on the one ſide towards this brave and deſerving body of men a moſt cruel, unjuſt and impolitic practice which has long cried for vengeance and which cannot fail to be one day heard and at that moment perhaps as likely as at any other. It is in every one's diſcourſe, that ſomething of the ſame kind may happen with reſpect to our common ſoldiery; I will not therefore dwell on that point. But what part might our Iſlands in the Weſt Indies take at ſuch a conjuncture? To whom are they the neareſt or on whom do they moſt depend for their lumber and other neceſſary circumſtances of their trade? Would there be in the Eaſt Indies the ſame neceſſity of conqueſt as the Dutch found? Might more equal conditions or independence itſelf be no temptation to one or the other or might it in

that day be thought a great ſin to change the words Old England for New? There is one point ſo important, ſo critical, that I hardly know either how to mention or how to be ſilent in it. Suppoſe that Ireland itſelf, I mean the proteſtant, opulent and ruling part of Ireland ſhould grow jealous; ſhould begin to make compariſons between the ſtate, ſituation and relation of the Americans towards us and their own;---but I will paſs by this ſubject. However I know ſo well the openneſs, the frankneſs and generoſity of that nation, as to be fully aſſured, that there are at leaſt none of that country who adviſe or urge at this time the preſent meaſures with any diſtant or double view to forward and haſten the independence of Ireland and that not at its own, but at the coſt and hazard of America. The human heart can hardly be conceived to conceal ſuch myſteries. But were it otherwiſe, our adminiſtration would no doubt be

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ſenſible of it and inſtead of being impoſed upon be the more upon their guard.

Unhappy are the people, which purſue thoſe ſteps that their friends moſt fear and their enemies moſt wiſh. Were the cabinets of Verſailles and Madrid or any other the moſt jealous of the power and proſperity of Great-Britain united in Council and that they had it in their option to drive and puſh us for their own advantage upon ſome ruinous and deſtructive meaſure, what would they chuſe before this very one which we are now of ourſelves ſo fatally and ſo madly running upon?

It is ſometimes ſaid, that Providence blinds the underſtanding of thoſe, whom it deſtines to deſtruction. When things are ripe for that end, men often provoke and haſten their own fate. But God forbid, that any one being at the helm of this

this State ſhould ever not fully and repeatedly conſider or that he ſhould from any unhappy impulſe ſcruple or heſitate to ſtay and to ſtop ſuch meaſures, as may in their conſequences make his maſter to ſit uneaſy on his throne nor ſuffer him himſelf to lay down his head upon his pillow without bearing on it the curſes of his country, but which may throw all the parts of the Britiſh empire into ſuch diſorder and confuſion, that neither he nor any man ſhall be able to guide or hold the reigns of its government.

I cannot gueſs into whoſe hands theſe ſheets may fall or how they may be received. It is not a Prince alone who may in theſe abject times be ſurrounded with flattery; a Miniſter may not want his ſhare of it. It is withal but a poor ſatisfaction for a private perſon to wiſh in the waſte and havock of his country, that it may be remembered; that there

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was not wanting One who laid freely and plainly before the Public and thoſe governing it the riſque and likelihood of theſe fatal events and circumſtances. But it is to be hoped, that better and more ſubſtantial effects will follow, ſhould theſe things be truth and reaſon, which are here advanced. It is at the ſame time the furtheſt from my meaning, that futurity can be foreſeen or that it is permitted to look into the book of the time to come. There is nothing certain in human affairs. But in incidents of this prodigious importance, in the fate of ſtates and of kingdoms, in dangers of this tranſcendent magnitude, probability takes the place of certainty and every prudent ruler ought to ſhun and avoid the one with almoſt as much caution, as he would the other nor can I finiſh this ſubject without once more repeating that our preſent debt puts us into a ſituation, in which no nation ever was before.

I know that ſome people affect to magnify the debts of France, but they are hardly worth ſpeaking of in compariſon of ours. I don't believe, that they exceeded at the utmoſt fifteen millions ſterling when the Regent Duke of Orleans took the method of the Miſſiſippi to cancel and annihilate them. The wants of Lewis the Fourteenth had been great, but his credit was as ſmall. What can the preſent King have contracted ſince to be compared to the debt of Great-Britain? Where is the credit? Does any one believe the Dutch concerns of that kind to be equal in France to what they are in England or has France itſelf ſupplied the reſt? However I will only obſerve more that the French debt conſiſts in great meaſure of arrears of penſions, places, poſts and other grants which the ſame hand withholds, as conferred; but that our debt was all received in millions ſterling.

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As to what has been ſaid that great men moving in a public ſphere are above the rules of right and wrong. He muſt be unworthy to hold the helm of any government, who is ſo ignorant of the facts and incidents before his time or ſo blind to thoſe about him as not to obſerve and perceive that good and virtuous actions, I mean, ſuch as are really ſo without the falſe colours of flattery and obſequiouſneſs, produce in general and national matters their proper and correſpondent effects. We have not indeed before our eyes in that caſe the formalities of a trial and a ſentence, the Judge in his robes or the apparatus of an execution; but due conſequences do from the general and original law given to the world follow a good or evil conduct in public concerns with much more certainty, juſtice and impartiality, than they do by the means of municipal laws in private. But I deſire to explain, that it is not the piety of a bigot

on his knees or the prayers even of a devout Prince which will ſtay or turn the general courſe and order of the world. Had that been the caſe our Henry the Sixth would not have fallen in a priſon by the hand of an aſſaſſin nor Charles the Firſt ſuffered on a ſcaffold by the axe of the executioner nor James the Second have led the latter part of his life in baniſhment. Theſe were all remarkably both devout and unfortunate Princes. I don't at preſent enter into the conſideration of what reward perſonal piety will meet with in another place; but it is the public good, a love and regard for that and attention to it, a conſtant reſolution never to take directly or indirectly by the means either of force or of corruption the property of the ſubject at will and at pleaſure, but to employ the prerogatives and the powers entruſted by the people only for their welfare and happineſs; which are the true trial and touchſtone of the con-

conduct of Princes and Miniſters, as ſuch. Theſe naturally produce affection, loyalty, fidelity, attachment and ſupport. But ſhould any man or number of men be regardleſs of the good or condition of others, trample on their rights, lay unjuſt hands on their properties, treat them rather like the beaſts of the fields than as their fellows and equals, ſhould they ſupport themſelves herein with the ſword and a ſuperiority of power; the great Author of mankind and of their welfare and happineſs has ſo linked and chained together cauſes and effects, that theſe things will certainly turn to the detriment and diſadvantage of them and theirs who do them; ſometimes by a ſilent and hardly obſervable courſe of things and ſometimes with long forbearance and at a great diſtance; but ſometimes likewiſe at the moment and upon the occaſion, with direct and immediate reſiſtance and a common confuſion, wherein the authors of the miſchief

miſchief are themſelves involved and wherein they often fall a prey and a ſacrifice. The ways of Providence and the courſe of futurity are unſearchable; but were any man to preſume to divine, how juſtice and injuſtice and the general morality of the univerſe may poſſibly in the preſent caſe operate, it would perhaps be; that Right will ſtrongly unite, cement and combine by a mutual aſſociation and aſſiſtance thoſe, who ſhall act under its banners, while Wrong ſhall naturally and on the contrary confound and weaken with diſunion, diſſention and diſturbances among themſeves thoſe, by whom it ſhall have been unhappily adopted. Theſe are on each ſide the ſuitable and, as it were, the neceſſary conſequences of their own choice; but there appear ſome untoward and threatening ſigns, that the Hand of Heaven will on the occaſion be heavy and ſevere, when woe to the party, which ſhall abide it.

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If any thing can in this caſe enhance the importance of the great ſtake, which we are about to venture, it muſt be a compariſon of the very little profit, that we are going to contend for. The Americans are willing and conſenting to give us all they have, provided that we will accept it with our right hand, but we are obſtinate to riſk every thing both of theirs and of our own rather than not to take it with our left. Our whole object is on this occaſion no more, than the difference between thoſe two propoſitions. Our Americans have now no gold or ſilver. It comes all to the mother-country. It would equally do ſo, did they receive as much again. They keep none for their own currency; they uſe themſelves paper for that and ſend us all the other. One would be amazed to think, what men or adminiſtrations can deſire. Cannot we be contented with all and do we inſiſt on having more than all?

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But it will be ſaid we want to tax them. I aſk why. It muſt be anſwered, becauſe we are bent upon getting their money. I repeat again, we have it already. But ſays a ways and means man; we muſt have it in the ſhape of taxes. No other will ſerve our purpoſe. I reply once more, that we have it really in that ſhape; for cannot we and don't we tax it when it comes hither and is not that the ſame thing? Are there not taxes enow to take it, as ſoon as it gets to Britain or why don't you aſk for more if there are not? Who ſays you nay here? I will be bold to ſay, that there is at this time raiſed on Great-Britain nothing leſs than ten millions ſterling a year, beſides the collection? which it need not be ſaid, is a very conſiderable ſum more. Our ſpecie has never been uſed to be reckoned at above twenty millions. It is ſaid, that about three millions and a quarter of guineas have on occaſion of the light gold been

brought

brought into the Bank. Let our currency be calculated on that ground and we ſhall according to any juſt reaſoning thereon appear to raiſe within the year by taxes, including the collection, a ſum at leaſt equal to half of the whole ſpecie and current coin of the kingdom; a prodigious proportion and perhaps incredible, were we not to examine into particulars.

Should it be ſaid, that a circulating guinea cannot but pay twenty different taxes in a year, ſome might poſſibly be at firſt ſight ſurprized at it. But how far ſhort will that on a more minute examination be found of the truth? Let us conſider only the courſe of a ſhilling for a very ſhort time. A chairman pays out of it for his pot of porter. How many taxes does that include; the new and old taxes on beer and malt and the tax on hops? They are more than I have time to reckon. His wife ſends next morning

to the ſhop for her tea and ſugar. How many more are there? I will leave them to be counted by thoſe better acquainted with the book of rates, than I am. But here are a conſiderable number gone thro' out of one ſingle ſhilling by the time, that a porter has got his beer over-night and his wife her breakfaſt the next morning. There remains then a third part of the money to run the gauntlet again in the ſervice of the man at dinner-time. However they do not perhaps amount quite to twenty; but ſo is likewiſe the time a good deal ſhort of a year and the money much leſs than a guinea. But this is not taking the matter in the ſtrongeſt light. There is a chain and union of taxes, which operate inſenſibly and almoſt beyond imagination. Go into a Shoemaker's ſhop. Buy a pair of ſhoes there. How many taxes does any one in effect pay then? The Journeyman Shoemaker muſt put into his day's labour and con-

conſequently there muſt be laid upon the ſhoes made by him all the taxes, which he and his family pay in the mean time for his ſalt, for his ſoap, for his coals, for his candles, for the linen and for the very ſhoes worn by him, his wife and his children and for very many other things. Theſe are all juſt ſo much money out of his pocket and he muſt be repaid them by his daily labour, which is his only means. He cannot otherwiſe live; there would be no ſhoes and men muſt go without them. But it is not the immediate taxes of the Shoemaker only which go upon his manufacture, but thoſe likewiſe of his tradeſmen. The price of his clothes is enhanced by the taxes, which the Taylor and the Weaver paid while they were making and weaving them; however not by theirs only, but by thoſe likewiſe of the perſons working for them in their turn and ſo on. Theſe muſt all be put on the ſhoes. Inſomuch that the whole

fully purſued and obſerved makes a ſeries and combination fit to put Newton or Demoivre at a ſtand. A poor guinea or ſhilling cannot in England put its head, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, out of any man's pocket, but that an army of theſe catchpoles are ready to ſeize upon it, wherever it ſtirs. The matter being then viewed in theſe lights, it ſeems no longer ſtrange, if we raiſe a revenue equal to the half of our currency or more. This is a prodigious operation and ſurely ſufficient to ſatisfy any adminiſtration whatſoever. Let us therefore content ourſelves with getting hither the American money. That is our buſineſs. We know what to do with it here. This is the very land of taxes. It is now coming on as faſt, as it can. Don't let us move Heaven and Earth only to diſturb it in its paſſage. Let us have the leaſt patience and fall to work upon it at home. We are certain, that it will be here and that it will then

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be taxed and, as it were, taxed upon taxed. The reſt is with all ſubmiſſion to my ſuperiors no better at the bottom, than a childiſh fancy and impatience and owing only to the want of a full reflection and conſideration on the ſubject.

I have yet ſomething to add on this head; which is, that were the Iriſh and the Americans both of them unanimouſly to cry out to us to ſpare their lives and to take all they have; to beg of us to ſend them ſuch another army of tax-gatherers, as our own, and with them a copy of our code of revenue-laws; I will be bold to ſay, that it would nevertheleſs be in us the worſt policy in the world and totally contrary to our own intereſt to take them at their words and to do in the leaſt degree any ſuch thing. We ſee the Thames flowing conſtantly into the ocean and yet always full. It need not be ſaid, that the rain and the

dew

dew are the cauſes of this, which firſt fall and fertilize the earth and then repleniſh that noble river. Were thoſe two ſtopped or dried up, it would not be long, before we ſhould paſs over dry-ſhod at London Bridge. Were they ſo only in part, the ſtream would then likewiſe lower in proportion. What our whole debt to foreigners amounts to, no one may probably know with exactneſs; but the more it has been enquired into the higher it has always appeared. However the intereſt of it is a current, which runs perpetually into the Continent. We do not indeed ſee it with our eyes, as we do the Thames; otherwiſe we love money ſo much better than we do water, that we might perhaps be leſs indifferent about it, than we are. It paſſes imperceptibly, but nevertheleſs ſurely and without ceaſing. What are then the cauſes which ſupply it? I anſwer, thoſe two great ſources of Ireland and America. Theſe firſt water

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and fructify with their moſt benignant current the whole iſland of Great-Britain and then finiſh their courſe in the diſcharge of our debt abroad. Their way is no more viſible than that of the intereſt itſelf of our debt, but it is alike certain and conſtant. Stop or dry up theſe and you will as ſurely ſtop or dry up the funds of our debts, as withholding the rain or the dew of Heaven would leſſen and lower the ſtream of the River Thames. Taxes will do this. They are the bane of commerce and of agriculture. They affect the Merchant, the Manufacturer, the Planter, the Farmer and the Labourer. Our America is not of an age to ſupport their operation. The things from above keep their courſe in ſpite of man for his benefit and advantage. It is God's very great mercy that the dew and the rain do not depend on Adminiſtrations, they would otherwiſe have undoubtedly been taxed and dried long ago. But it is not

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ſo, with what is of our own fabrick or production. We have a great power over riches and treaſure. Governments can effectually cut off the wells and the ſprings of theſe. We have only to look abroad in the world to be abundantly convinced of that truth. The example of Great-Britain will not prove the contrary. It was when and while we were not taxed, as we now are, that we proſpered, grew great and rich. Thoſe times gave us ſtrength to bear for a while the burthen ſince impoſed upon us. It is from the Revolution, that our prodigious taxes have begun. They were laid by degrees and ſo muſt their effects be perceived. They don't operate like a ſtorm or a whirlwind. Let us give them a fair and full trial before we declare, that we are not undone by them. It will then be time enough to make ourſelves a model for others. I aſk, whether it is not our own actual difficulties brought on by theſe

very

very taxes, which do now at this inſtant urge us upon our colonies and which are the cauſe of all the preſent conteſt and diſorder. It is one of the firſt principles in commerce not to burthen the means and materials of manufactures. It would be nipping the fruit in the bud. The ſame reaſoning holds here. Let us keep our hands from theſe two great cauſes and ſources of our treaſure and wealth. They have hitherto wonderfully ſupplied and ſupported us. They may continue ſo to do, if we will ſuffer them.

But it may be ſaid, that we have at home great and profitable manufactures and our woollen one in particular; whereby we ſtand leſs in need of diſtant aſſiſtance. That is very true; but ſo is it likewiſe, that we have on the continent very many expences and demands for money beſides the intereſt of our debt. We ſhall be very fortunate, if we can with

the means of all our richeſt reſources make at the year's end an even accompt.

But it may be aſked, what are we then to do. We are preſſed with our domeſtic burthens and incumbrances. Theſe put us firſt on the meaſure of Stamps in America, wherein we did not ſucceed. Theſe induced us afterwards to make demands on the India-Company, wherein we had rather better fortune. It is theſe, which have again brought us back to our attack on America. How are we either to ſtand under them or to march forwards? Is it ſafe to reſt as we are? What courſe are we to take if it is not? This is perhaps as ſerious a propoſition, as one Engliſhman can put to another. No man laments more than the writer of theſe ſheets, that twelve years of peace are now elapſed without any thing being done, without any eſtabliſhment being made, which may enable us to maintain another

war

war or perhaps even in peace ſupport long the preſent very heavy preſſure, under which we labour. We are in the mean time daily liable to be engaged in war. We have now had an uncommon interval of peace. It was but a very few years ago, that we were on the brink of a rupture with Spain, which would undoubtedly have been attended by one with France. How can any Miniſter ſleep in peace, who has on his hands the care of a great government and the welfare of many millions of people, while public affairs are in a condition ſo very unprepared for an event, which may at any moment happen and which may in our preſent ſituation bring with it conſequences of an importance hardly to be conceived? Surely they think on theſe things, whoſe duty moſt demands it of them. It is impoſſible, that ſuch concerns of ours can be left only to chance and hazard or as it were, to the fortuitous

concourſe of atoms. One would think there could hardly be a man in Britain, Miniſter or any other not perpetually employed at the plough, but who muſt daily revolve in his mind the preſent circumſtances of his country, our burthens, our debts and our expences and at the ſame time caſt in his own breaſt, what muſt be the beſt means of our ſupporting ourſelves under them, whether in war or in peace. There is an iſſue, which ſome men have in view and which I will not expreſs, we may be aſſured however that they do but very ſuperficially conſider the matter, who imagine, that this will in our caſe take place without the utter ruin and confuſion of every thing. All is notwithſtanding as yet tranquility and ſunſhine with us. We poſſeſs a great and fine country; we have moſt noble and beneficial dependencies; we have a fleet; we have an army; we have ſeveral hundred thouſands and perhaps near a million of men capable

ble of bearing arms in their own defence; we have a revenue with a ſurplus above the intereſt of our debts and expences. Surely there is yet an opportunity to find ſome plan; to ſettle ſome eſtabliſhment, whereon things may reſt ſafely and ſecurely and the Public and all reaſonable perſons be ſatisfied, that they do ſo. There is however no time to be loſt. It may be too late to prepare, as it were, in the day of battle and at the moment when our difficulties preſs ſtrongly upon us. But this is of itſelf a very wide field and one of the greateſt of conſiderations nor is it my immediate ſubject. But the meaſures now carrying on will not effect it or any thing towards it. No ſurrounding dangers or difficulties are a good reaſon for running down a precipice; our fate can but lead us thither at laſt. However no other end can happen to us from the way, which we are now in, if we perſevere and proceed in it.

This

This ſeems to be a ſufficient anſwer to the point before us. However I will not ſo turn my back on this queſtion, as not freely and frankly to propoſe, what, I truſt, will at leaſt be more effectual for our purpoſe, as well as more eaſily carried into execution, than what we are now driving at. I mean to do almoſt directly the contrary of what we are about, that is to give a greater liberty and latitude of trade both to Ireland and to America, to America including our Weſt India Iſlands. That is my propoſition. We are the ſeat and center of Government. This is our ſtrength. This is our advantage. This is what we are to preſerve. While we retain this, all the money, riches and treaſure of the more diſtant and dependent parts of our Empire cannot fail to flow in upon us. We have nothing to do with little jealouſies about this trade or that manufacture; it is the proper buſineſs of the rich to ſpend

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their money and of the poor to earn it; the State may well, without meddling in it, leave them to ſettle the means of that matter with one another. The end of all trades and of all manufactures muſt reſt with us, while we continue the ſeat of dominion. It is the neceſſary conſequence of giving the tone and the law. Ambition, pleaſure, faſhion, buſineſs, curioſity, education, trade and commerce, poſts and places poſſeſſed abroad by Engliſhmen and numberleſs other cauſes will contribute to and effect it. The iſland of Jamaica and our other iſlands in the Weſt-Indies what money and commodities equivalent to money have they ſent to England, could the whole be added together? Had they in the time acquired ten times as much, it would all have run the ſame road. The climate would have driven the poſſeſſors from thence, while the ſeat of empire would have invited them hither. Do

not

not we ſee the very Proprietaries of our northern colonies living in England as private gentlemen and have not we ſometimes known them voting in Minorities of our Lower Houſe of Legiſlature, while they might have been almoſt as Princes and Kings in their own governments? Were it in the next month to rain over the different parts of Ireland a million of money, how long does any one imagine it would be, before at leaſt nine hundred thouſand pounds of it would find its way into England? Have we lately wanted very ſufficient proofs, that there remains no abundance of caſh in that kingdom? I will not repeat, what has been ſaid of North-America; but they have by their paper-money invented the very contrivance of the world for ſending to us every ounce of their gold and ſilver, did we but know when to be content. Look at the city of London; they neither plant nor do they ſow nor do they reap, yet Solomon or his

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Jeruſalem were not in all their glory rich and great like that capital of our dominions. The money of our whole empire is remitted thither, as the blood runs to the heart. Our great body politic is preſerved and nouriſhed by the diſperſion and circulation of it again from thence. This is the conſtant and never-failing courſe of things. But the caſe is much more ſtrong, if we take Great-Britain itſelf, whereof London is only a part. That would retain a conſiderable ſhare of what it receives, did not the intereſt of our debt carry it out, as faſt as it comes in. This is the iſſue and the drain, which prevents us from perceiving ourſelves more enriched and repleniſhed from the vaſt quantity of treaſure perpetually arriving to us from many parts. This may perhaps be the reaſon, why we are leſs ſenſible, leſs attentive and perhaps ſometimes leſs grateful on the occaſion. But that is all our own fault, our own doing. We

have none to thank for it but ourſelves. We ought not on that account to eſteem theſe ſupplies the leſs, for had we not them, it would be much worſe with us. Nothing could follow but our laſt deceaſe and diſſolution, as a State. Theſe muſt and will take place, whenever the others ſhall ſtop. However theſe things don't require much reaſoning. We have the world before us for an example. Such are every where the effects between the center and other parts of a Government, although perhaps in no caſe more ſo than in that of Great-Britain on account of certain circumſtances and cauſes attending that empire, which are particularly ſuited to produce them. This is our point, if we are but ſenſible of our true intereſt; let us but preſerve this our great and ſacred prerogative, the other benefits and advantages will of courſe follow, even while we are aſleep.

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I ſhall uſe no words to prove that this arrangement will bring a greater influx of treaſure to thoſe, to whoſe liberty of trade it ſhall extend. The perſon the moſt prejudiced or the moſt ſhort-ſighted in the caſe will not diſpute that with me. I will venture to preſume on that point. This will therefore attach to us our dependencies at the ſame time, that it enriches us ourſelves. It will ſtrengthen and faſten the bond and union between us. It will confirm our ſuperiority, while it encreaſes the fruits of it. It will bring us more ſpoils and profits than conqueſt, although it will operate by love and affection. It will require neither fleets or armies to enforce it; we need fear no revolts, no defections or confederacies on the account of it. How happy would it be, if all the circumſtances of the other plan would in the ſame manner anſwer and play into the hands of each other! When will men

be contented to do to others no more miſchief, than what will turn to their own benefit? States and Miniſters will have advanced no mean way in policy as well as in morality, when they ſhall once have learned to confine all their evil towards others within that circle. It is the very perverſeneſs of folly to ſuppoſe, that men can ſerve themſelves only by oppreſſing others. But here on the contrary the hand of nature itſelf works with us. Freedom of trade is our foundation; no wonder then that ſo many bleſſings coincide together. There is open before us a rich and wide field; we have only to enter and to reap the harveſt, which is ripe and plentiful. This propoſal reſts therefore on three points; to wit, that it will bring a greater influx of treaſure into our outward dominions; that this muſt enrich the center of empire; which cannot therefore likewiſe but encreaſe its revenue. Theſe are ſhort propoſitions and no way

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perplexed, Let them be well examined. All falls to the ground, which has been ſaid on the ſubject, if any one of them be falſe or miſtaken; but ſhould they on the contrary be all of them moſt evident, moſt certain and indiſputable, let any man and the greateſt in truſt the moſt conſider; how he can anſwer to Ireland, to the Colonies, to his Country at home, to his King himſelf in the concern of his Revenue and his Exchequer, the refuſing his attention and aſſiſtance to a meaſure, ſo very practicable and at the ſame time ſo univerſally beneficial and ſalutary.

This is the more and much more neceſſary on account of the preſent condition of Ireland. The late enquiry concerning their linen manufacture, the public hiſtory of their emigrations and the ſtate of their credit at the beginning of their preſent Seſſion of Parliament

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have made that ſufficiently known. I ſhall not pretend to deſcribe it. England has perhaps from that Iſland reaped more real benefit, than Spain ever did from Mexico or Peru. Spain gains indeed from thoſe poſſeſſions great riches of ſilver and gold; but ſhe has dearly purchaſed them at the price of her inhabitants and people at home. Whereas Ireland affords us in many ways a very advantageous aſſiſtance and ſupport of men, while we receive from her at the ſame time a conſtant moſt rich influx and ſupply of money. We now ſo depend on theſe things and can ſo ill do without them and are by theſe means ſo united with our Sifter Iſland, that ſhould ſhe on any account unhappily ſink, ſhe cannot but like a mill-ſtone faſtened about our necks carry us down along with her. Should her condition grow worſe, who knows but it may turn to rage and deſpair and either have an effect on her Legiſlature

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or that the majority thereof may be hardly able to manage and govern their own State. I am unwilling to point out ſuch poſſibilities; but it will not be long health and wealth in England, ſhould any irretrievable miſchief happen in Ireland. A moderate remedy might however now be timely, for what may in futurity be beyond redreſs. A greater liberty and latitude of trade is the proper aſſiſtance in the caſe. It is what Ireland itſelf wiſhes and deſires. It will at the ſame time be of more benefit to us than to them. France is beating us out of the trades of Turkey, of Spain and even of Portugal. Let but looſe the Iriſh and they will do as much for them and likewiſe for ſome others. It is Great Britain, which withholds the hand of Ireland and not the nature of things, that confines it. Let us but conſent and they will ſoon ſtretch out their right hand into many a market in the world, where it now never appears and

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having done ſo they will immediately pay to us with their left the money gained there as ſurely, as that we are born Engliſhmen. I don't point out particulars; lights will not be wanting in that reſpect, whenever there ſhall be an inclination to demand them. I don't moreover mean to ſignify, that any opening of the commerce of Ireland and America recommended within the compaſs of theſe ſheets will of itſelf be adequate to all the demands of our preſent ſituation. That will in all appearance require a new and univerſal arrangement of our taxes and commerce, wherein Great Britain herſelf muſt bear a moſt material part. No man can ſay, that all the money in Europe is equal to our National Debt nor can therefore any proviſion be ſufficient, but what may produce effects anſwerable to ſuch a very great neceſſity. Some plan ſeems to be demanded, which may bring into Great-Britain a good part of all the

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gold and ſilver now current in the world. Nothing leſs will perhaps do our buſineſs. The practicability of this cannot but appear a doubtful problem. Were all ſtates whatſoever formed on a conſtitution the moſt advantageous for commerce, whereof each is capable, it is evident, that they would then ſhare among them thoſe two precious metals in ſo near a proportion, that no one could therein have over the reſt any very great ſuperiority. But this is exceedingly wide of the caſe. No one ſtate is ſo conſtituted; but on the contrary almoſt all governments whatever are framed and act on principles directly oppoſite thereto. This gives a very great opportunity for an extreme difference and diſproportion in that reſpect. It is perhaps on the availing ourſelves thereof, that depends the future welfare of our country and the ſafety, the ſtability and the very ſubſiſtence of our ſtate. The Dutch are a ſmall people or at leaſt have

but a very confined territory and that defended with difficulty from the ſea. They have nevertheleſs done a great deal in the way, which we are ſpeaking of. They are certainly therein at the head of all mankind. However it is evident and might be eaſily pointed out, that they are yet far ſhort of perfection. There is good room for others to go beyond and eſpecially for a ſtate which has ſuch advantages as Great-Britain. However what degree of advantage the nature of things will admit of on this head or how to attain thereto are not queſtions of this preſent inſtant. I have ſaid thus much led to it by my ſubject together with the intereſt of the Public therein and the neceſſity, which I am perſuaded that my country is at this time under of finding and carrying into execution ſome ſuch great, general and ſalutary meaſure. Happy will be the hand that ſhall in the firſt place prevent the ruin, whereon we are now running.

ning. We muſt begin there. That is the object directly before us. Let us next enlarge the trade of Ireland and America. This will do a great deal. It may withal lead us towards a more univerſal plan, with which it cannot at the ſame time but coincide. It will withal be well, that this double benefit of theſe two parts of our country went hand in hand together. The preſent ſtate of Ireland makes it abſolutely and immediately neceſſary for the one and the intereſt of Great-Britain requires it for both.

I don't enter into particulars concerning the ſtopping up the Port of Boſton or the new laws given to Maſſachuſett's-Bay. However I muſt obſerve, that the alteration of their Charter and of their Civil Government is not temporary like the other proviſions, but perpetual. The breaking of Charters is making the worſt war upon mankind. It involves

the innocent and thoſe yet unborn. Every thing depends with men on their conſtitution of government. Such a meaſure is therefore wantonly laying waſte the territories of the earth and I ſpeak it with reverence, but it is even forbidding Providence itſelf to make mankind happy thereon, unleſs he ſhall for the undoing the works of unreaſonable and ill-judging men perform immediate miracles and ſuſpend or counteract his own laws of nature, which is ſurely not to be ſuppoſed or expected. As for thoſe, who refuſe or impede law and juſtice for blood, let them be well aware, that they don't thereby bring it on their own heads or warrant private men to be themſelves their own avengers. However the whole will no doubt be received in America as a declaration of war and depend upon the ſame iſſue. It muſt be by force and conqueſt if they ſubmit. It is probably not a month or a year, that will finally determine

mine this affair. The flame may break out immediately or the fire may ſmother until ſome fatal opportunity of our being engaged in a foreign war or ſome other ſuch occaſion. The authors of theſe meaſures no doubt expect that the removal of the Cuſtomhouſe and the ſuſpenſion of the trade of Boſton will bring theſe people on their knees and force them to ſubmit to the reſt of our meaſures. It is evident, that this is their idea. They might have been well informed and inſtructed and ought to have been ſo before they proceeded ſo far. They may nevertheleſs find themſelves much miſtaken in the event, however forward they are to hazard on their opinion the welfare and proſperity of their country. It is no wonder, that ſome men cannot even at the diſtance of America bear a Democratical Conſtitution. But they ought to know the Hiſtory of the World better than to be ignorant of

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the ſtrength and the force of ſuch a form of government and how ſtrenuouſly and almoſt wonderfully people living under one have ſometimes exerted themſelves in defence of their rights and liberties and how fatally it has ended with many a man and many a ſtate who have entered into quarrels, wars and conteſts with them.

Some ſay, that all the contradiction and oppoſition of America originates from home and that it is only the faction of England, which catches there. Nothing perhaps teſtifies a greater ignorance of the true ſtate of that country, than ſuch a notion. What is all the ſpirit of Patriotiſm or of Liberty now left in England, more than the laſt ſnuff of an expiring lamp? It is not longer than three and thirty years ago, that it was otherwiſe with us. But who can ſay whether the ſame flame, the ſame ſacred flame may not at this time burn brightly and ſtrongly

ly in America, which once ſhow'd forth ſuch wonders in Greece and in Rome and from whoſe aſhes it ſtill enlightens a great part of mankind, I mean, all who are not ſunk in ignorance or barbarity. They have certainly there excellent and free forms of government and which partake perhaps in ſome degree of the principles, whereon were framed the ancient ones of thoſe eminent cities. They are themſelves as yet a new and uncorrupted people. They carried with them formerly the ſpirit of Liberty from England, at the time that it was in its greateſt purity and perfection there nor has it ſince degenerated by the climate. Whoever ſhall judge of their temper by that at home and proceed accordingly, will perhaps in the end be ſcorched by that flame, which he may find to burn too powerfully for him and of the nature and of the means to extinguiſh which, he was totally ignorant.

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I have now conſidered the rectitude, the practicability and the profit to be expected from our preſent meaſures and have gone ſo far as to offer another meaſure inſtead. I hope, that I have proved my propoſitions to a great degree of clearneſs and certainty. I don't know what to do more on this ſubject unleſs I ſhould propoſe ſomething, which might convince and ſatisfy without the trouble of reaſon and argument. This ſeems difficult. However I will not deſpair. Let me be permitted to try my hand in the caſe. I will recommend and, ſo far as becomes me, deſire and requeſt, that every one when he conſiders of this ſubject and eſpecially before he uſes any hard words or paſſes any harſh laws, will place himſelf in America; will imagine himſelf born, bred, reſident and having all his concerns and fortune there. I don't mean in the light of a Governor or of one, who ſeeks to recommend

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and to advance himſelf here at the expence of his countrymen in that part of the world; but as one, who has no other views or intereſt except in the common good of his colony or continent. Let then any ſuch man candidly and fairly aſk himſelf in his own breaſt, what he ſhould in that ſituation think of being taxed at Weſtminſter and let no man on this occaſion throw a ſtone, whoſe heart does not plainly and roundly anſwer him with its aſſent. I may make too free with Miniſters of State; but I would particularly preſs this on thoſe, whoſe deſires, paſſions and inclinations are followed by effects and who hold perhaps at this moment in their hands the fate of Great-Britain and of North-America. This I ſay, is a propoſition without a ſyllogiſm; but which if properly brought home and enforced by every man upon himſelf, may perhaps penetrate, move and ſoften more

than all the arguments and earneſtneſs, which I have hitherto uſed.

I would willingly try this experiment of tranſpoſition upon a late tranſaction, wherein ſome peoples opinions ſeem to be affected by locality. Certain letters (ſee letters of Governor Hutchinſon, &c.) have been publiſhed of an American Governor and Lieutenant Governor and a third perſon together with remarks and the ſpeech of a learned and ingenious Gentleman. They are offered as an appeal to the public againſt the colony of Maſſachuſett's-Bay. Theſe cannot therefore, but be themſelves likewiſe the objects of a public conſideration. I have by the touchſtone of locality a mind to examine and queſtion ſome of this learned gentleman's reaſoning. It is now but between eighty and ninety years, ſince we of this country baniſhed our King. On what ground did we do it?—It will be

anſwered;

anſwered; that we did not like his actions; for that they tended to deprive us of our beſt rights and properties. That we did it as Engliſhmen on the Conſtitution of England—Who was the common Judge between us and him?—There was no ſuch common Judge. We judged for ourſelves. He was our King, our Magiſtrate, our Truſtee. When we found him to fail in the eſſential points of theſe offices, we took another. This was our right, as Engliſhmen—But we ſet aſide one of his daughters from her turn in the ſucceſſion and appointed inſtead a perſon, who had no title by birth. The King's horſe threw him and the Lady ſucceeded. But that was chance. It might in a courſe of nature very well have happened, that ſhe had never been Queen. What had ſhe done?—She had taken a remarkable part in the Revolution and was totally unexceptionable. But there were in one ſcale the welfare and happineſs of

many millions of people and in the other the advancement of only one Lady, although a deſerving one. There was therefore no equality, the latter could not but kick the beam—I anſwer, that I ſubſcribe to this with my hand and my heart. But this is one ſide of the medal. Let us turn the reverſe. An American Governor is not ſo big as a King; he don't wear a Crown nor bear a Scepter nor ſit on a Throne nor is worſhipped on the knee nor has a Navy nor an Army nor makes Biſhops nor Judges nor is his Civil Liſt perhaps above a thouſand pounds a year. He ſeems to be much more reſponſible and more removable, than a King. Suppoſe then that one of our Colonies ſhould take the ſtrongeſt exceptions to their Governor and deſire to change him; would they in that caſe be permitted to judge for themſelves?—No. Why not?—Becauſe they are Americans. Who are to judge for them?—We. Why ſo?

—Becauſe

—Becauſe we are Engliſhmen.—But would their application be to us a ſufficient cauſe for a removal?—Perhaps not; but on the contrary a reaſon to continue him at preſent and to promote and advance him afterwards. That has been the caſe before and may probably be ſo again—But why is the meaſure which we mete to them ſo different from that, which we meaſure to ourſelves?—Becauſe we are Engliſhmen and they are Americans.—This muſt be owned to be perfectly juſt and ſatisfactory and the Americans are the moſt unreaſonable men in the world, if they don't ſee it exactly in the ſame light.

But ſuppoſe that the Repreſentative Body of the Province ſhould make the complaint?—The anſwer would then be, that there was no accuſer or if any one choſe to ſpeak Latin no *delator*.—Suppoſe that they complain of falſehood and trea-

treachery towards the Province?—That would be no charge, no *crimen*.—Suppoſe that they gave in evidence the party's own letters?—That would compleat the thing; for there would then be no evidence, no *teſtis*.—But will this hold water?—Admirably; with reſpect to America and in Latin.

It is ſtrongly diſputed, whether theſe American letters are of a public or a private nature. This may not in itſelf be a very important point. However let us endeavour to ſettle it ſince it lies in our way. Whatever concerns and affects the intereſts, the welfare and happineſs of a whole people is and muſt be of a public nature, whether papers, letters or any other thing whatſoever. Good and evil are not matters of Law or of Logic. They are the moſt, if not the only eſſential circumſtances of the world. They are what every thing elſe refers to. They ſtamp

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an eternal mark and difference on all things which even imagination cannot cancel or eraſe. The enjoyment of the one and the avoiding of the other is the very end of our being and likewiſe of all the beings which do or which even can be ſuppoſed to exiſt and which have a ſenſe and perception of them. Whatever therefore relates to the general good and evil of a People is of a public nature. It is that circumſtance which makes it ſo. The terms are as good as ſynonomous. Whatever concerns on the contrary only this or that individual is of a private nature. It is confined to his or their happineſs or welfare; to his or their good and evil. There is again the true and unerring diſtinction. Theſe things ſeem clear to the greateſt degree of intuitive certainty. It is ſtrange to be forced to reaſon about them. However we are told otherwiſe. If ſome compliments happen in a letter to be made to an old Lady, it changes the

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eſſence of every thing; ſhe contracts and confines the whole matter and all becomes of a private nature; although the chief ſubject of that very letter ſhould be to adviſe and point out the means of altering the Charter and of new modelling the Conſtitution of a Colony and that there ſhould be recommended therein the finding ſome way according to its own language "to TAKE OFF the original incendia-"ries," leſt they ſhould "continue to inſtil "their poiſon into the minds of the peo-"ple;" but the mention of the old Lady makes it all private (ſee Mr. Wedderburn's ſpeech page 94 and letter of Mr. A. Oliver Feb. 13, 1769.) But ſuppoſe that theſe letters were really meant and intended to produce public effects; what will that do?—Nothing at all. If the perſon had not at that moment a place, to whom they were written, it ſignifies nothing; although he might have had a poſt before and might look for one again

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and although he might have communicated theſe letters to others for the very purpoſe of affecting the Public. All this will be of no importance, if the perſon did not happen to have a place at the time.—Would not one be tempted to think, that as ſome endeavour to leave no property in America, others have a mind to baniſh all human reaſon out of American affairs?

But let us take this matter in another light—Suppoſe a Prince to have been the ſubject of theſe letters inſtead of a People and his conduct and character to have therein been ſo freely treated and cenſured inſtead of theirs and the diveſting him of his power and dignity ſo plainly mentioned and recommended inſtead of the depriving them of their rights and privileges and the *taking him off* propoſed inſtead of the *taking off* ſome of them, what would have been the conſequence?—High

Treaſon—But might not theſe have been private letters of friendſhip and the receiver have ſecreted and concealed them?—There is no ſuch thing as private letters in the caſe. No civilities ſent to the faireſt Lady in the land can make them ſo. The perſon receiving muſt at his own peril carry them to a Secretary of State or to a Juſtice of the Peace or to ſome other Magiſtrate; we don't otherwiſe want a word for him, which is miſpriſion of treaſon.—But who would take notice of ſuch a thing?—Let Mr. Attorney or Mr. Solicitor anſwer that—But on what ground is all this?—Becauſe the Prince is ſuppoſed to be the public perſon and to repreſent the whole people and that what relates to him may affect them—But there are bad Princes and writing againſt them is ſometimes writing in ſupport and in the intereſts of the Public and of the People—No ſuch plea or propoſition is ever ſuffered. It

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would on the contrary be an additional crime even to make or to offer it.—But does any one by repreſenting a body acquire more prerogatives than belong to that body itſelf or are the Public more affected through a third perſon than immediately in themſelves?—Yes, juſt ſo. Say a word againſt a Prince and beware of informations, inditements, fines, priſons, ſcaffolds and gibbets. Theſe are the ſtrongeſt arguments in the world and I never knew any man get the better in diſputing with them. But abuſe a people from morning till night and every one knows, that the rule and the law is; let them mend their manners, if it is true; let them deſpiſe it and leave it to fall on the author, if it is not—I am at the feet of Gamaliel, I deſire only to learn. I ſhall not contradict the doctrine concerning a Prince and I ſubſcribe heartily to that about a People. Should theſe commonwealths of America ever become as ſtrong and independent,

as they are now weak and dependent and ſhould they in their greatneſs and glory remember a word of the humbleſt and the meaneſt, but not the leaſt ſincere or the leaſt diſintereſted of their friends and advocates, it will be, never to employ force and power againſt reaſon and argument; to leave thoſe inſtruments to ſuch as chuſe to make uſe of them, but to believe truth to be ever the real intereſt of the People and the Public and that no other incenſe or ſacrifice ſhould ever be offered at the altars of that Goddeſs, but the pure oblation of a freedom of thinking, ſpeaking and writing. But here it cannot well fail to be obſerved; that ſhould theſe people, whoſe diſtreſſes are now pleaded, ever come to be maſters both of themſelves and of others, to be glutted with power and riches, that they will certainly run the race of the reſt of mankind and learn in their turn tyranny and injuſtice, as their betters and their predeceſſors have

done

done before them—I anſwer, no man perhaps believes this, more than myſelf; however that is not now the caſe. But it is hoped, that neither will there in that day be wanting ſome honeſt man, who will endeavour to make them bluſh at ſuch a conduct, if he ſhall not be able to diſſwade and divert them from it. However I would willingly in my turn now aſk, whether this laſt obſervation is alſo local and confined to America or whether it extends itſelf likewiſe to Great-Britain?

It is not reaſon and argument; it is this locality which operates on the preſent occaſion. It is this only that makes many men eaſy and indifferent in the caſe about right and wrong, juſtice and injuſtice. Were my countrymen now in England dipped once in the River Delaware, I dare ſay, that it would make an almoſt miraculous change in their opinions. If ſome, who might be named were

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tranſpoſed into Aſſembly Men, they would perhaps be as ready to repeal certain late laws as ever they were to paſs them. However I will not go back again to topicks, which ſeem ſufficient to awake the moſt lethargic Engliſhman out of his ſoundeſt ſleep ; but I deſire to put a caſe relating to this locality itſelf and its power and effects.

At the beginning of the laſt century. there lived a gentleman of the name of Fawkes. He hired a houſe and ſome cellars and other apartments in Weſtminſter. We will ſuppoſe that he had a leaſe of them ; a leaſe is for the time as good as a purchaſe ; it might not indeed be ſtamped, but ſtamps were not then in faſhion, it was good without. He bought ſome gunpowder. It is to be believed, that he paid honeſtly for it. He could perhaps have produced a receipt for it. He placed it in the cellars or other apart-

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ments hired by him. He had indeed a mind to amuſe himſelf with blowing up the Legiſlature of Great Britain. He met with his reward. But ſuppoſe that he and Garnet and the reſt of their aſſociates, inſtead of falling into the hands of an Engliſh Jury, had been tried at Rome before the Conſiſtory Court or any other Court there, they would no doubt have found an advocate. That is no other than the duty of the profeſſion. I won't take upon me to ſay, whether he would in this caſe have flouriſhed about private property, treſpaſs or forcible entry; but whatever turn the Italian council had thought proper to give the cauſe of his clients, has any one ſeriouſly the leaſt doubt, but that they would have been cleared and acquitted and probably by the Court of Rome itſelf in good time preferred and promoted. As it happened, nothing remained for them but the honour of Martyrdom, which however

ever ſome of them are ſaid to have attained. So much can a difference of climate do and ſuch force have prejudice, prepoſſeſſion and locality. But Garnet and Fawkes and their friends were fools, Jeſuits as ſome of them were. They did not underſtand their trade. A certain northern Prince of our time and perhaps ſome others, have found better ways of blowing up Legiſlatures than with gunpowder; which don't make a quarter of the crack and combuſtion, but which are ten times more effectual.

But our colonies might be well enough, were it not for Dr. Franklin, who has with a brand lighted from the clouds ſet fire to all America—No Governments care ever to acknowledge the people to be fairly againſt them. For whatever may be the caſe with the opinions of the multitude in abſtruſe and refined matters, which but little concern them nor do they much

much trouble themſelves about; yet the end and therefore the touchſtone and trial of all Government being their welfare and happineſs, there is hardly common modeſty in affecting to deſpiſe and refuſe their ſenſe concerning their own good and evil, their own feelings, benefits or ſufferings. It is in theſe things that the voice of the People is ſaid to approach, that of their Maker. The ſycophants of Miniſters endeavour therefore to throw on the artifice and influence of individuals all diſcontent or diſſatisfaction of the Public. Mr. Wilkes moves England and Dr. Franklin America; as if we had here no feeling, but through the firſt and they had there neither eyes or ears, but by the latter. It were happy for mankind, if Adminiſtrations procured their own votes and majorities with as much fairneſs, as the voice of the People is commonly obtained. I wonder, whether we ſhould then have ever heard of any government in

Europe indebted in the ſum of a hundred and forty millions ſterling or be at this moment under the alarm of a parent ſtate attacking its own colonies or of a great empire ſetting at work its fleets and armies only to throw the parts of itſelf into miſchief and confuſion. It is idle and childiſh to be crying out againſt this or that private perſon. The truth is, that whenever governments heap up combuſtibles, there will always be found a hand to put the match to them or theſe would heat and fire of themſelves, if there were not.

But is not Mr. W.'s Philippick againſt the Doctor a capital performance?—I am ſure that I have not the leaſt inclination to depreciate the ingenuity of that learned Gentleman, whoſe argument I have been making ſo free with. But the being charmed with ſpruce expreſſions or a ſmartneſs of invective, where the ſubject makes againſt the privileges or the liber-

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ties of a People, what is it better, than if a parcel of priſoners or of galley-ſlaves were ſo abject as to take a pleaſure in the rattling, or as it were, in the muſic of their own chains?

I am drawing towards an end of my career. However I will firſt ſay ſomething to the Americans themſelves. I obſerve them to charge ſometimes on the Britiſh ſubjects in general the meaſures, with which they are aggrieved. Herein they do us wrong. I may venture to affirm, that there would not be hurt the hair of the head of an American, were it to be voted by all our country. Every one muſt remember, the univerſal ſatisfaction produced by the repeal of the Stamp Act and it would no doubt be the ſame again were the preſent meaſures diſcharged and remitted. But it often happens, that Repreſentatives and their Conſtituents are in the moſt eſſential and the moſt important points directly and diametrically

metrically oppoſite to one another. I don't pretend to account for this. It is a fatality. But the Americans ſhould conſider, that two different parts of a country may be oppreſſed by one and the ſame hand. Adminiſtrations have been ſquandering and running us in debt at home, until our whole ſubſtance is waſted and conſumed. It may now be coming to their turn. But *procul a Jove, procul a fulmine.* Great-Britain is firſt brought to its extremity. Let any of our dependencies compare their burthens with ours and then complain of the nation, if they ſhall find that ours are the lighter. I don't mean to make a merit of this; but let them ſuppoſe the ſame ſtrong hand to be upon us both, when they ſhall have been convinced, how little we are in this reſpect to be envied.

I am unwilling to take my leave without ſaying likewiſe one word to my Countrymen of England. It is not only riches

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and power, men and money, which the centre of government receives from the detached parts of its dominions, but likewiſe credit and honour in the world. The Scotch and the Iriſh are as good men, as any in Europe. This is well known, wherever they ſeek ſervice and eſtabliſhments and the which they are left to do in more parts, than is for the benefit of Great Britain. Our Countrymen of America have not yet ſo figured in our quarter of the globe; but it is hardly a compliment to place them clearly at the head of their own, the offspring of all other people there included. If there are any ſpoil'd children of our national family, it muſt be the Engliſh themſelves; unleſs that riches and luxury mend the manners of men. But nevertheleſs being ſo the ſeat of Empire and all commands iſſuing from our capital and our name being forward, the actions, the merits, the figure, the reputation and the glory of all our Countrymen whatſoever and whereſoever

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do exceedingly redound to us and to the credit of England and of Engliſhmen. There is another circumſtance which none of us can obſerve but with ſatisfaction. I mean, that we ſeem to be, as individuals, on as fair terms with the other parts of our nation, as they with one another; that the name of Engliſhman is as acceptable and will go with them as far, as that of any other of the appellations into which we are divided. Whether this is our deſert or a conſequence of the ſame cauſe, I won't ſay; but it is what muſt give us pleaſure. In return for theſe things they deſire no more than a juſt ſenſe and acknowledgement of them. Whether we do make this return, whether theſe circumſtances have always the weight with us, which they merit, Engliſhmen will beſt determine by examining into their own breaſts. But this we may be aſſured of; that the good will, affection and attachment of our Countrymen ſpread throughout our common Empire will be our firmeſt ſtrength

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and ſecurity, if it ſhall be our lot to continue in our preſent ſplendor and proſperity; as likewiſe that the ſame cannot but be our beſt ſupport and aſſiſtance, wherewith to weather the ſtorms of fate and fortune, if Heaven ſhall on the contrary have any reverſe or times of difficulty and diſtreſs in ſtore for us.

I have now finiſhed, unleſs it may be a few words with reſpect to the Author himſelf. He hopes, that ſhould in the warmth of writing any inadvertencies or inaccuracies have fallen from him, that they will be readily overlooked; he is perſwaded, that there are none ſuch, as affect his argument. He has wrote with freedom, but he truſts without offence; he has no perſonal views whatſoever in any thing, that he has advanced or offered; he has no intereſt in any diſtant part of the Britiſh Dominions, neither in Scotland, Ireland or America; he has neither trade or traffick with them nor a foot of land in

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any of them. His concerns, his property, his family, his friendſhips, his affections, every thing moſt dear to him center in South-Britain. He has no intercourſe or connexion with any man, that either is or that ever was or who to the beſt of his knowledge deſires to be a Miniſter. He is totally indifferent, who ſhall be at the head of our affairs, any otherwiſe than as the Public may be concerned in it. He would not perhaps in his humble ſituation accept of any place or poſt, high or low, which the King has to confer, great and powerful as he is. He wiſhes only that theſe ſheets may be read, as they are written, with the pureſt and the moſt diſintereſted intentions for the good, the greatneſs and the proſperity of our whole empire, for the union, harmony and preſervation of all its parts and for the particular intereſt, ſafety, peace, welfare and happineſs of England.

April, 1774.

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